Soviet and Vietnamese Refugee Adults and Adolescents in Maryland:
A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

This report provides a comparative analysis of the quantitative data collected on both Soviet and Vietnamese adults and adolescents during 1999-2003. The report includes a comparison of former Soviet and Vietnamese adults, a comparison of former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents, and a section on adolescent-family relationships in these two groups of refugees. Research samples include 453 former Soviet and 185 Vietnamese adults and 132 former Soviet and 159 Vietnamese adolescents. The two samples are comparable in average current age (47 years old for Soviets and 50 for Vietnamese) and age of arrival in the United States (41 for Soviets and 39 for Vietnamese). However, the Vietnamese sample has been in the United States longer (10.5 years to 6 years). The Vietnamese sample is considerably less educated in their own country than the Soviet sample.

Adults - Both groups were equally well adjusted psychologically, though the longer they are in the country, the less adequate their adjustment in terms of well-being. For both groups the great majority of close interpersonal relationships were with other refugees from the same group, regardless of amount of time in the country. However, the former Soviet sample was more acculturated to American culture despite being in the country less time, and the average job for former Soviet adults was considerably higher in terms of status and prestige than those held by Vietnamese adults.

Adolescents - Both groups report greater language competence in English than in their native language yet both identify with their culture of origin more than American culture. In addition, both groups score above the mean on a scale of self-esteem and both are doing very well academically in school and have academic expectations in terms of college and graduate or professional schools after college. However, former Soviet adolescents report greater overall acculturation to American culture than do the Vietnamese adolescents and acculturate to American culture more rapidly than do first generation Vietnamese adolescents.

Family Dynamics - Parents and adolescents in both groups rated their family environment as very cohesive. However, both groups of adolescents experience the greatest stress in interactions with parents, and both adolescents and parents reported a considerable number of areas of adolescent/parent disagreement in the home. Frequently mentioned areas of disagreement involved doing chores, school grades/homework, how to spend free time, and money. In addition, there was an acculturation gap between adolescents and parents that affected how adolescents were coping. Finally, both groups of adolescents reported culture-brokering activities for their families such as answering the phone and translating documents.

Recommendations focus on the role of job enhancement for Vietnamese adults, a concern with family interactions and school-family dynamics for service providers, and the reminder that the acculturation and adaptation of these refugees is a long- term process whose implications go far beyond immediate resettlement activities provided by resettlement agencies. Thus, the concept of resettlement as a short-term set of activities, while extremely important, can usefully be cast in a longer-term perspective as different needs and issues among refugee adolescents and their families emerge.

Executive Summary

This report represents the final paper of the 4-year project on the economic and psychosocial adaptation of refugees in the State of Maryland. Previous reports have documented work conducted independently with Somali, Soviet, and Vietnamese refugee communities in Maryland. The final report provides a comparative analysis of the quantitative data collected on both Soviet and Vietnamese adults and adolescents. The report is organized in three sections covering (I) Adult Refugees; (II) Adolescent Refugees; and (III) Adolescent-Family Relationships.

The data for this report were collected in Maryland between 1999 and 2003. The present report provides both a comparison of data presented in previous reports and additional data not yet reported.

Demographics

The sample of Soviet refugees was larger than that for Vietnamese. The samples were comparable with respect to age for both Soviet and Vietnamese refugees. The Vietnamese refugees had lived in the U.S. a shorter period of time than the Soviet refugees, and 25% of the adolescents had been born in the U.S. The Soviet refugees had more formal education prior to migration than had the Vietnamese.

- **Sample size.**
  453 Soviet and 185 Vietnamese adult refugees
  132 Soviet and 159 Vietnamese adolescent refugees
- **Average Age.**
  47 for Soviet and 50 for Vietnamese adult refugees
  15 for Soviet and 16 for Vietnamese refugees
- **Average Time in U.S.**
  6 years for Soviet and 10.5 years for Vietnamese adult refugees
  5.7 for Soviet adolescent and 8.7 years for Vietnamese adolescent refugees who born outside of U.S.
- **Generational Status**
  All of the Soviet refugee adolescents were born in the former Soviet Union
  25% of the Vietnamese adolescents were born in the United States

- **Average Education.**
  69% of Soviet and 19% of Vietnamese refugee adults had a college or post- college education

Acculturation

Adults:

- Former Soviet adults tend to acculturate to American culture more rapidly than their Vietnamese counterparts, particularly with respect to English language acquisition.

Adolescents:

- Former Soviet adolescents tend to acculturate to American culture more rapidly than first generation Vietnamese adolescents.
- Former Soviet adolescents report greater American than Russian acculturation, while Vietnamese adolescents are equally acculturated to American and Vietnamese culture overall.
- Both groups report greater language competence in English than in their native languages.
- Both groups identify with their culture of origin (Russian or Vietnamese) more than with American culture.

Families:

- An acculturation gap was found between adolescents and their parents in both groups. Children reported considerably less fluency in their native language than their parents. Adolescents almost always report greater English fluency and participation in American behaviors than their parents.
- The greater the acculturation gap, the more family disagreements and dissatisfaction were reported by adolescents in both groups, and by parents among Soviet refugees. Specifically:
  - Gaps in American identity and Russian language predicted more family disagreements for Soviet refugees, as reported by parents.
  - Gaps in American identity and American behavior predicted worse family functioning, as reported by adolescents in both groups.
  - Gaps in Vietnamese language competence were related to more family disagreements, as reported by Vietnamese adolescents.

Social Integration and Social Support:

- The great majority of close interpersonal relationships for adults from both groups are with other refugees from the same group, regardless of amount of time in the country.
- Adolescents of both groups report considerable social integration into American peer networks, though they, too, retain more social contact with peers from their country of origin.
- Adults and adolescents from both groups view close family members as the greatest source of social support, with friends form the country of origin next.

Adolescent Acculturative Hassles

- "Acculturative hassles" involve those aspects of adolescents' everyday lives that occurred as a result of their being refugees and that they experienced as stressful.
- For both groups, the most <u>frequently encountered</u> hassles involved parents.
- For Vietnamese adolescents, the most frequent hassle involved parental pressure to do well in school.
- For Soviet adolescents the most encountered hassles focused primarily on culture brokering or conflicts between what American parents let their children do as compared to what Soviet parents allowed.
- The most <u>intense or stressful</u> hassles for both groups also involved parents:

Frustration at not being able allowed to do something that their American friends' parents let their children do and not being able to explain something to their parents because parents did not understand American culture.

Family Environment

- Adolescents from both groups reported high overall family satisfaction and considerable cohesion among family members, though Soviet adolescents report somewhat greater satisfaction than do the Vietnamese adolescents.
- Parents in both groups rated their family environment more positively than did adolescents.
- For both groups of adolescents, the most frequently reported concerns involve disagreements over doing chores at home, school grades/homework, how to spend free time, and money.

Culture Broker Role: Its Importance and Relation to Acculturation and Adaptation

- While over 90% of adolescents in both groups report some culture brokering at the present time, it is not a frequent activity for them.
- For both groups, the most frequent culture brokering behaviors are "answering the telephone", while least frequent is "dealing with governmental agencies".
- For both groups, more culture brokering was done by adolescents whose families had been in the U.S. less time, and whose parents were lower on English language competence.
- For both groups, increased culture brokering is related to increases family disagreements.
- For former Soviet adolescents, culture brokering negatively affects adaptation in school, in the family, with peers, as well as psychological adaptation.
- For Vietnamese adolescents, culture brokering has a positive, not negative, relationship with self-esteem.

Psychological Adjustment:

- Adolescents and adults from both groups report comparably high levels of psychological adjustment.

Adolescents:

- Both groups score above the mean on a scale of self-esteem, with former Soviet adolescents scoring slightly higher than Vietnamese adolescents.
- For both groups, greater levels of overall American acculturation contributed to higher self-esteem.
- For the Vietnamese adolescents, retention of overall Vietnamese culture contributed to enhanced self-esteem, whereas it did not do so for Soviet adolescents.

Adults:

- For adults, time in the U.S. consistently predicted lower psychological adjustment in both groups. The longer the refugees were in the U.S., the greater the psychological distress in both groups, the greater the alienation among the Soviets, and the less overall life satisfaction among the Vietnamese.

- Job status was an important predictor of psychological adjustment for the Soviet sample, while job satisfaction was an important predictor of psychological adjustment for Vietnamese adults.
- Higher job status held in the former Soviet Union predicted psychological distress, suggesting that those who are highly educated and had held high positions prior to migration may be at greater risk for psychological difficulties in resettlement.
- Overall American acculturation aided the positive psychological adjustment of former Soviet adults but was not related to Vietnamese adult psychological adjustment.
- Retention of the culture of origin (Russian or Vietnamese) served a positive, though limited, psychological function for both groups.

Economic Adaptation:

- Overall, Vietnamese adults in our sample face considerable economic struggle in terms of job status and huge upheaval in terms of kind of work engaged in compared to their work in Vietnam.
- The status and prestige of the current job is considerably higher among Soviet adult refugees compared to Vietnamese adults in our sample.
- Job satisfaction with current job was equivalent in the two groups
- Soviet adult refugees are more likely to switch jobs more frequently and improve their job status more over time than are Vietnamese adults in our sample.
- Job status appeared to improve for Soviet refugees with time in the U.S. but not for the Vietnamese sample.
- Neither group is likely to find jobs in the same field as they held in their country of origin. However, the Soviet sample moves closer to their previous type of work over time, while the Vietnamese adults do not.
- While Russian friends and family play a consistent role in the job finding process over time, family and friends play an even greater role in the Vietnamese community.
- Higher levels of education in the country of origin predicted higher status jobs for both samples, as well as status of first job in the United States.

Adolescent School Adjustment

- The two samples are both doing well in school, with average grade point averages of 3.4 and 3.5, between a B and an A
- Both samples report an equally high sense of belonging or feeling comfortable in the school environment.
- Adolescents in both samples report that over 90% of their parents expect them to graduate from college. A similar proportion of Soviet (66%) and Vietnamese (60%) parents would like their children to complete post-graduate education.

- Over 90% of both groups said they themselves aspire to a college degree or better, with 58% of Soviet and 62% of Vietnamese adolescents hoping to graduate from law, medical, or graduate school after finishing college.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1.	***Acculturation unfolds over a long period of time, but can appear to occur deceptively quickly for children.*** Although children switch relatively rapidly from having their native language be dominant, to being English language dominant, this does not mean that they are acculturated. With respect to identity, in particular, both Vietnamese and former Soviet adolescents hold on to their native identity for a long time, and continue to identify more with their native culture than as American. Thus, even though they may speak English fluently, they continue to integrate the two cultures in their lives, and may experience a cultural disjunction between the old culture and the new. These children also experience a cultural disjunction between home and school. Our findings show that children in both groups do acculturate to the American culture faster than their parents, particularly with respect to English language. This creates acculturation gaps in families. ***Recommendation*:** Provide acculturation and orientation services to refugee children and families for many years after resettlement. It is important for service providers not to underestimate how long the process of acculturation takes, and to adopt a long-term perspective on this process. Thus, children may need help understanding the demands of American schools and continue to require orientation to aspects of American culture even when they appear to be very Americanized. Further, their parents often continue to need cultural orientation and support for many years.
2.	***Psychological Adjustment appears to worsen for adult refugees in both groups the longer they live in U.S.*** Distress and alienation were found to increase, and life satisfaction to decrease as a function of length of time in the country for both groups. This is in stark contrast to the commonly held assumption that refugees adjust and do better with the passage of time. Rather, these data suggest that as refugee adults overcome immediate resettlement problems, their psychological adaptation actually worsens. This may suggest that while refugees may be focused on tangible problems initially, such as housing and jobs, over time as their more basic needs are met they confront psychological difficulties. ***Recommendation:*** Provide mental health services for adult refugees that they can access many years after initial resettlement. This finding in particular suggests the importance of addressing the adaptation process of refugees within a long-range time perspective rather than focusing on initial adjustment and employment only.

3.	***Both Acculturation to American Culture and Maintaining Ethnic Culture were found to be important for refugee adults and children.*** While our data suggest that acquiring aspects of American culture is clearly adaptive for refugee adolescents and adults in both groups, we also found that retention of aspects of Russian and Vietnamese culture was also important. With respect to acculturation to American culture, overall level of American acculturation was related to reduced alienation for both groups of adults and positively related to adolescent self-esteem in both groups of adolescents. With respect to maintaining ethnic culture, for the former Soviet sample, retention of Russian culture reduced alienation, while for the Vietnamese, retention of Vietnamese behavior increased life satisfaction. There was no instance in which retention of any aspect of the culture of origin was detrimental to psychological adjustment. ***Recommendation*****:** While resettlement programs of necessity need to focus on educating refugees about varied aspects of American culture**,** they must not do so at the expense of supporting the maintenance of native culture. For adults, this can include supporting them in efforts to educate their children with respect to their native culture, and support them in efforts to form strong bonds with other members of their ethnic community. For children, school programs that respect and affirm the children's native culture, provide opportunities for them to learn about it, celebrate it, and share it with other children, and invite parents into the school to educate others about it can greatly aid refugee children in their psychological adaptation.
4.	***Ethnic networks*** **provide significant supports with respect to** finding employment for both former Soviet and Vietnamese adults, regardless of the amount of time in the country ***Recommendation*****:** Programs would benefit from developing outreach efforts and collaborative relationships with ethnic organizations to support and utilize ethnic networks and ethnic communities in the employment process.
5.	***Family adjustment can be difficult for refugee families not only initially but over time, and parents view their family environment more positively than the children.*** A combination of findings suggest that it is in the family context where the greatest stress and potential for conflict related to the acculturation process arises. For example, both the acculturation gap between parents and their adolescent children and the culture broker role are related to reported family difficulties, and as such represent important areas of family dynamics that service providers need to consider. Both adolescent groups agree that the greatest sources of family disagreements focus on doing chores at home, school grades, how to spend free time, and money. At the same time, they view parents as the most important source of social support. Together, such findings heighten the importance of the family context as both a source a stress and support. ***Recommendations*****:** Programs focusing on family services that view the family both as a domain of potential conflict but also a source of strength and support are recommended. Such a focus is intended to build on the centrality of the family both in its own right and as a resource for adolescent support. It is also important to keep in mind that in providing

	services, parents and adolescents have somewhat different perspectives on adaptation in the family.
6.	***Both groups hold high educational aspirations for their children*.** Even though Vietnamese refugees were less well educated than former Soviets, their expectations for educational attainment of their children were extremely high in terms of current school performance and hopes for advanced education beyond high school. Given the overall academic success of the adolescents from both groups, such expectations are not unrealistic. ***Recommendation***: There is a need at the high school level to provide school resources that inform, guide, and support the post high school careers of these refugee adolescents. In addition, the development of school resources to communicate with parents about issues relating to college placement, scholarships, and the necessary examinations to qualify for such opportunities need to be stressed. Such efforts require attention to providing multicultural staff and parent liaison roles at the school level.
7.	***Economic Adjustment.*** For both groups, it is clear from our data that the role of the initial job the refugees obtain after arriving in the country is important both in its own right and as a predictor of the status of future jobs. However, in other ways the economic adjustment of the two groups is strikingly different. Soviet refugees start with higher prestige jobs and the job prestige increases over time, whereas Vietnamese adults are more likely to start with lower prestige jobs and not improve their status to the same degree over time. This pattern signifies increased job status disparities between the two groups over time. Finally, high status of job held prior to migration for former Soviet refugees was a predictor of higher status of jobs held in resettlement, but also of psychological distress. While as a group these refugees do seem to advance substantially over time with respect their socio-economic status, it also appears that they are at risk for psychological distress. ***Recommendations:*** Where possible, attention needs to be paid not only to finding a job but to finding the best job available. Further, different strategies for job finding and job improvement may be required for different refugee populations. In the Vietnamese community, creating opportunities for economic development and helping refugees continue to move up in job status as they switch jobs beyond initial employment is important. Thus, the notion that refugees' economic situation will significantly improve in future jobs does not appear to be inevitably true for this population. Agencies can provide a great service to this community by helping refugees advance in subsequent jobs. Findings with former Soviet refugees suggest the importance of attending to unique psychological issues facing highly educated refugees. These refugees held high level jobs

	prior to migration but face diminished job status and difficulty obtaining employment that uses the skills they brought from the former Soviet Union.

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Overview

Previous reports have presented information separately on former Soviet and Vietnamese adults and adolescents. This chapter provides a comparison of the two adult and adolescent populations. The focus here is on those aspects of the data where comparable information was gathered in terms of similar, though not always identical, measures. Because we wanted to make sure that our questionnaires were appropriate to the two different populations, we discussed all of our measures with members of the respective communities beforehand. This resulted in having somewhat different instruments for the two populations because of differences in experiences prior to departure and after resettlement. For example, we were urged by our Vietnamese colleagues to include a measure of traumatic events experienced in Vietnam, whereas such a measure was not appropriate for the former Soviet sample. Thus, our report focuses on the shared measures. Readers are referred to the prior reports on each of the adult and adolescent groups separately for additional group-specific information. In addition, however, we do present not only data reported in previous chapters but new data not included in the original reports.

The report is organized in three sections.

- Section I provides a comparison of former Soviet and Vietnamese adults.
- Section II offers an adolescent comparison.
- Section III focuses on three aspects of adolescent-family relationships: (1) perceptions of the family environment; (2) the acculturation gap between adolescents and parents; and (3) the "culture broker role", in which adolescents aid their parents in helping to translate the new culture to them. Both these areas have implications for family functioning that can inform both an understanding of refugee family dynamics and service delivery issues.

SECTION I
FORMER SOVIET AND VIETNAMESE ADULTS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Sampling Strategy and Sample Characteristics

As described in prior reports, the sampling strategies for the former Soviet and Vietnamese adults differed. With respect to the former Soviet samples, agency lists of resettled refugees allowed us to develop a representative sample of adult men and women who resettled in the State since 1989. While efforts were made to select Vietnamese refugees that represented a wide range of more recent arrivals from Vietnam, the sample was ultimately a convenience sample (see our prior reports for additional information on sampling in both communities). Table 1 provides the comparative data on the two samples.

The two samples are quite comparable with respect to relative percentages of men and women, are approximately the same in terms of age of arrival in the U.S. and age when our data were gathered. The overwhelming majority of adults in both samples were married, almost all in the Vietnamese sample.

There were, however, important differences. First, the former Soviet sample is considerably larger than the Vietnamese sample, reflecting the fact that we had greater access to the former Soviet community as one of us was a member of this community. In addition, the Vietnamese sample has been in the U.S. a longer time (10.5 years compared to 6 years for the former Soviet sample), reflecting differences in immigration waves as a consequence of differing historical circumstances. Moreover, the Vietnamese sample is less educated overall than the former Soviet sample, with five and a half times as many Vietnamese with a high school education (28.5% vs. 5%) and only 19% with a college or post-college education compared to 69% of the Soviet refugee population. Thus, the Vietnamese in our sample came to the United States with less

TABLE 1: ADULT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

FORMER SOVIET ADULTS (N=453)		**VIETNAMESE ADULTS (N=185)**	
Variable	**Percent or Mean**	**Variable**	**Percent or Mean**
Gender		Gender	
Male	46%	Male	51%
Female	54%	Female	49%
Age	47 (range 29-65)	Age	50 (range 33-65)
Age of Arrival	41 (range 26-54)	Age of Arrival	39 (range 20-59)
Length of Time in U.S.	6 Years (range 3 months - 23 years)	Length of Time in U.S.	10.5 Years (range 9 months - 27 years)
Married	90%	Married	98%
Education		Education	
1) High School	5%	1) Less than High School	28.5%
2) Technical School	22%	2) High School	30%
3) Partial College	4%	3) Trade or Technical School	7.5%
4) College	62%	4) Partial College	15%
5) Candidate/Doctoral Degree	7%	5) College	13.5%
		6) Post-College Education	5.5%
Place of Origin:		Place of Origin/Part of Vietnam:	
Ukraine	43%	North	0.5%
Russia	28%	South	78.5%
Belarus	15%	Central	19%
Other	13%	Did not answer question	2%
Refugee Status	95%	Refugee Status	72%
		U.S. Citizen	61%

social capital in terms of education. In addition, fewer (72% compared to 95%) came with refugee status. Finally, 61% of the Vietnamese sample reported U.S. citizenship after an average of 10 years in the country. We did not ask this question of the former Soviet refugees.

Acculturation

In our prior reports we differentiated the concept of acculturation into three related but distinct processes: (1) language acquisition and retention of the language of the culture of origin, (2) behavioral acculturation, and (3) cultural identity. Table 2 provides comparative data on our former Soviet and Vietnamese sample with respect to their acculturative status in these three areas. The Table provides no data on Vietnamese adult language acculturation because, as we found in our Soviet refugee sample, refugees who immigrate as adults do not lose their native language, and we were advised that it would be insulting to ask Vietnamese refugees to rate their Vietnamese language abilities. We thus assume that, like the former Soviet adults, their average on language is 4.0.

TABLE 2: Acculturation
(1 = NOT AT ALL ACCULTURATED, 4 = VERY MUCH ACCULTURATED)

	FORMER SOVIET ADULTS		VIETNAMESE ADULTS	
	American Culture	**Russian Culture**	**American Culture**	**Vietnamese Culture**
Language	2.6	4.0	2.1	4.0 (assumed)
Identity	2.2	2.9 ***	2.4	3.6 ***
Behavioral	2.6	2.7 ***	2.3	3.2 ***
Overall	2.5	3.2	2.3	3.6

*** indicates that differences between American and Russian, or American and Vietnamese culture are significant at the $p<.001$ level.

As shown in Table 2, both former Soviet and Vietnamese adults score higher on measures of their native cultures than on measures of American culture. This suggests that they retain their culture of origin more than adopting American culture across all three aspects of acculturation (language, behavior, and identity). The difference is more pronounced among Vietnamese adults, however, in that their retention of Vietnamese culture is greater than former Soviet retention of Russian culture (overall mean of 3.6 vs. 3.2) and their acquisition of American culture is less than their Soviet counterparts (2.3 compared to 2.5). This difference occurs in spite of the former Soviet sample having been in the United States an average of 4 years less than their Vietnamese counterparts. It is most pronounced in terms of language acquisition, where the former Soviets seem to learn English considerably more quickly.

Together, these results suggest that former Soviets in our sample acculturate more quickly to American culture than do Vietnamese, particularly in the domain of English language acquisition. In addition, they retain less of their cultural identity and engage in fewer behaviors

of the culture of origin than do the Vietnamese, even though they have been in the country less time.

Social Integration and Social Support

One indication of the pattern of acculturation of refugees involves the degree to which they make friends with Americans and are able to use them as sources of social support. With respect to social integration, we asked both former Soviet and Vietnamese adults about differing degrees of social contact with Americans, ranging from socializing outside of work, a less personal level of contact, to being invited over for dinner, a more intimate level of contact. Finally, we asked about close friendships with Americans. The results of these inquiries are found in Table 3.

TABLE 3: SOCIAL INTEGRATION			
FORMER SOVIET ADULTS		**VIETNAMESE ADULTS**	
Question	Percent (Mean)	Question	Percent (Mean)
In the past 3 months, of the people you've socialized **with outside of work, how many were:**		**In the past 3 months, of the people you've** socialized **with outside of work, how many were:**	
Russian/Russian Jews	**77%**		**17%**
American/American Jews	**17%**	**White**	**10%**
		Black	**7%**
		Latino	**66%**
		Asian	**87%**
		of Asian % that are Vietnamese	**5%**
		Other	
Of the families to whose house you've been invited for dinner **within the past 3 months, how many were:**		Of the families to whose house you've been **invited for dinner** within the past 3 months, how many were:	
Russian/Russian Jews	**89%**	White	4%
American/American Jews	**9%**	**Black**	3%
		Latino	1%
		Asian	92%
		of Asian % that are Vietnamese	93% 2%
		Other	
Of your closest friends**, how many are:**		**Of your** closest friends**, how many are:**	
Russian/Russian Jews	**87%**	**White**	**14%**
American/American Jews	**10%**	**Black**	**5%**
		Latino	**2%**
		Asian	**83%**
		of Asian % that are Vietnamese	**91% 3.5%**
		Other	
% in total network (mean of 3 items above**):**		**% in total network (**mean of 3 items above**):**	
Russian/Russian Jews	**80%**	**Asian**	**80%**
American/American Jews	**15%**	**% of Asian-Vietnamese**	**90%**
		Non-Asian	**14%**

Social Integration: Because of differences in the contexts of the former Soviet and Vietnamese refugees, we did not use precisely the same categories to describe associations with U.S.-born individuals. However, it is possible to aggregate across different categories to make meaningful comparisons as to the degree to which former Soviet and Vietnamese refugees associate with native-born Americans. For both groups the great majority of their interpersonal friendships are with other refugees from the same group. In each category of integration, former Soviets report slightly higher affiliation with their own ethnic group than do Vietnamese, though the differences are slight and may be related to the different lengths of time the two groups have been in the U.S., with the Vietnamese here, on average, 4 years longer than the Soviet refugee sample. In addition, the Vietnamese sample overwhelmingly associates with other Vietnamese and not with other Asian groups. Furthermore, Vietnamese social integration is somewhat greater with Whites than with Blacks, particularly in the area of closest friends.

Overall, both groups remain primarily involved with fellow refugees over time, with the social relationships and contacts averaging around 80% in both groups.

Social Support: To assess social support we asked refugees to rate the extent to which they would turn to a number of people in their lives if they needed economic or other "tangible" support, if they needed help with a personal problem or wanted to have fun. Table 4 presents the comparison data for the former Soviet and Vietnamese samples.

TABLE 4: SOCIAL SUPPORT (1 = do not provide support, 3 = provide a great deal of support)			
FORMER SOVIET ADULTS		**VIETNAMESE ADULTS**	
Support received from:	Means	Support received from:	Means
Spouse	2.8	Spouse	2.8
Family living with you	2.7	Family living with you	2.7
Russian Friends	2.5	Vietnamese Friends	2.4
Relatives	2.3	Relatives	2.0
Colleagues	1.8	Colleagues	2.0
American Friends	1.7	American Friends	1.8
Neighbors	1.4	Neighbors	1.6

Here, the rank ordering of support sources is essentially identical across the two groups, with spouses and family living in the home as the most important sources of social support. In addition, by far the greatest social support comes from members of the refugee community rather than from Americans.

Psychological Adjustment

Overall Adjustment: Our questionnaires included three comparable instruments to assess overall psychological adjustment of the two populations: a measure of overall psychological distress, an assessment of degree of feelings of alienation in the United States, and an overall life satisfaction measure. Table 5 provides the comparison of these data.

TABLE 5: Psychological adjustment			
FORMER SOVIET ADULTS		**VIETNAMESE ADULTS**	
Variables	**Mean**	**Variables**	**Mean**
Psychological Distress (1=not distressing, 4=extremely)	1.7	Psychological Distress (1=not distressing, 4=extremely)	1.5
Alienation (1=low, 4=high)	2.2	Alienation (1=low, 4=high)	2.2
Life Satisfaction (1=low, 5=high)	3.7	Life Satisfaction (1=low, 5=high)	3.6

As can be seen in the table, there are essentially no differences in overall adjustment ratings on these three measures in the two groups. The Vietnamese report somewhat less overall distress, but former Soviets reported slightly higher Life Satisfaction. Also, in general the absolute level of adjustment found in Table 5 is quite high across the three measures. Thus, there is little

reported distress and alienation, and considerable overall life satisfaction. While there is discussion in the psychological literature about the possibility that culture may influence the degree to which one is willing to disclose distress and unhappiness to others, particularly among researchers who are outsiders, there seems to be no substantial reason not to view these data on psychological adjustment as generally very positive across both groups.

Predictors of Psychological Adjustment: Our other reports included analyses of what factors contributed to positive psychological adjustment in the former Soviet and Vietnamese samples. The similarities and differences in factors influencing psychological distress, alienation, and life satisfaction are graphically depicted in Figures 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Here we summarize the findings. First, the most consistent predictor of psychological adjustment in both samples was time in the United States. Importantly, time in the U.S. predicted greater psychological distress in both groups, greater alienation among the former Soviets, and less overall life satisfaction among the Vietnamese. In no instance did it contribute to positive adjustment in either group. This suggests that psychological adjustment worsens over time the longer the refugees live in the U.S.

Differences in the two groups were found with respect to the importance of the work domain for psychological adjustment. The status of their current job in relation to their job in the Former Soviet Union was important for psychological adjustment for Soviet refugees, whereas for the Vietnamese sample it was the degree of job satisfaction that was important. For Vietnamese refugees, job satisfaction was a significant positive factor with respect to all three measures of adjustment. For the former Soviet sample, job satisfaction was related only to reduced psychological distress. For the former Soviet sample, the status of the current job was a significant positive predictor of psychological outcomes, whereas higher job status in the Former Soviet Union predicted a greater current level of psychological distress. The reasons for this are certainly complex but surely include the fact that because Soviet refugees held relatively high status jobs prior to migration, difficulties in regaining such job status in the U.S. can lead to psychological distress.

With respect to the role of acculturation in psychological adjustment, overall American acculturation was related to more positive adjustment for former Soviets in terms of overall life satisfaction, but not for Vietnamese. Overall level of American acculturation was related to reduced alienation for both groups. In addition, only for the former Soviet sample, higher levels of education and English proficiency were related to lower reports of psychological distress.

Furthermore, there was some evidence that retention of the culture of origin served a positive function for both groups. For the former Soviet sample, overall retention of Russian culture reduced alienation, while for the Vietnamese, retention of Vietnamese behavior increased life satisfaction. There was no instance in which retention of any aspect of the culture of origin was detrimental to psychological adjustment.

Finally, it should be noted that there were gender differences in the data as well. For example, both former Soviet and Vietnamese women were more likely to report greater psychological distress than men. Moreover, former Soviet women, but not Vietnamese women, reported a greater sense of alienation in the United States than men. Thus, where gender differences were found, they suggested that women are having more difficulty in terms of psychological

adjustment than men, or that women in both populations are more likely to acknowledge psychological difficulties in a questionnaire.

Figure 1: Factors influencing psychological distress for former Soviet (illustrated by dotted lines) and Vietnamese refugees (illustrated by dashed line)

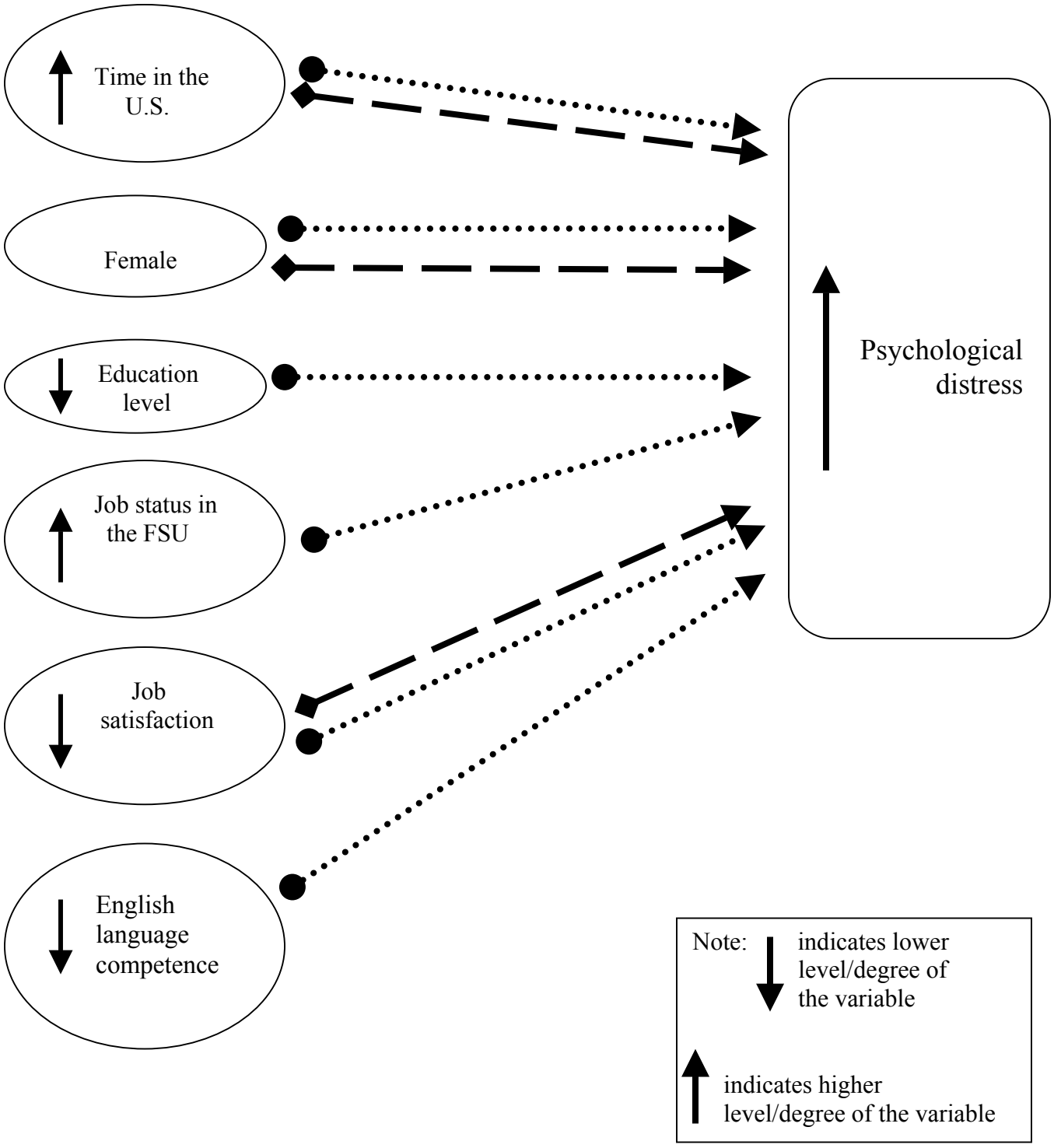


Figure 2: Predictors of Alienation for former Soviet (illustrated by dotted lines) and Vietnamese refugees (illustrated by dashed line)

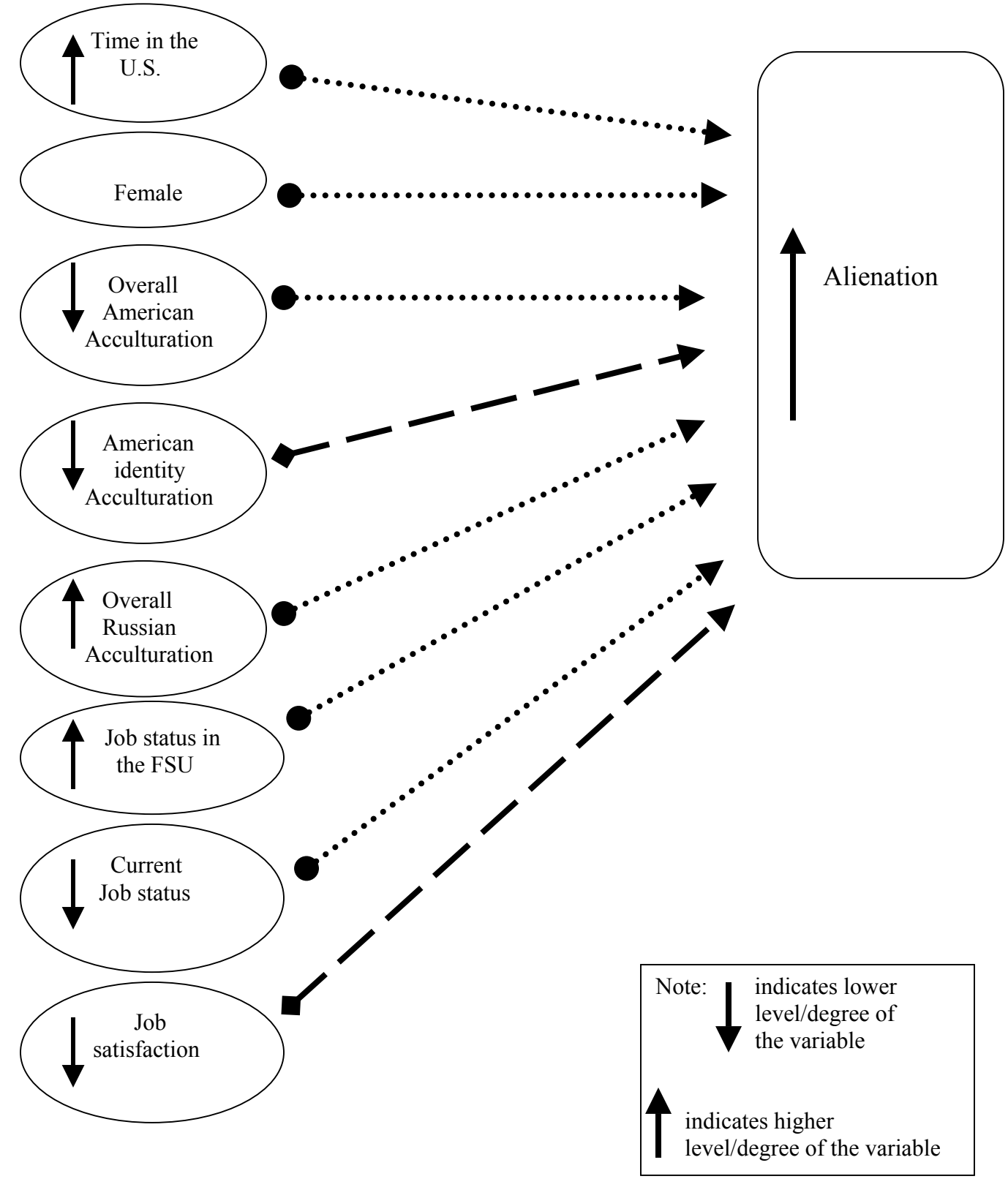
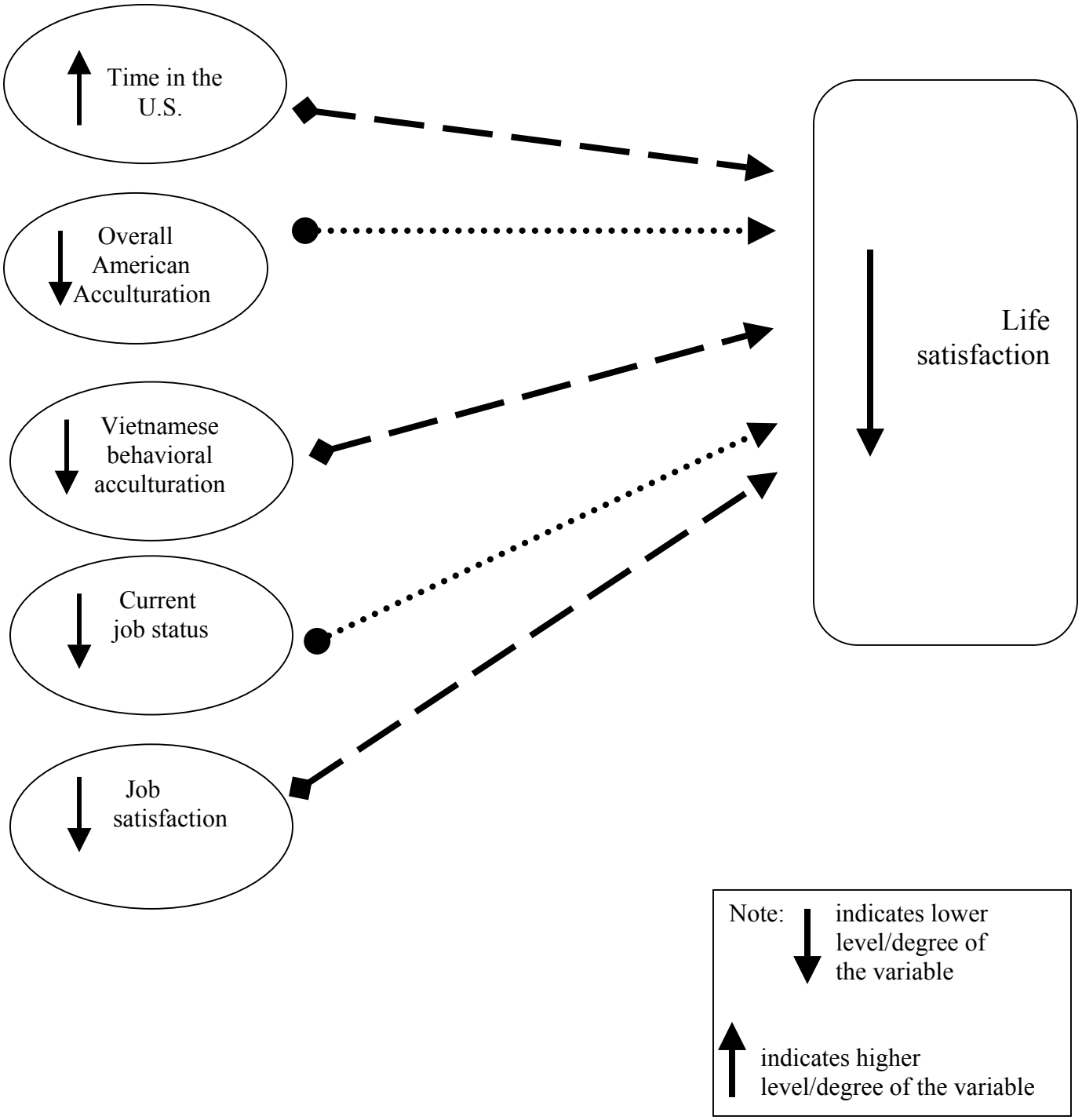


Figure 3: Predictors of Life Satisfaction for former Soviet (illustrated by dotted lines) and Vietnamese refugees (illustrated by dashed line)



Economic Adjustment

Because of the centrality of self-sufficiency in the resettlement process, considerable attention was paid in both sample to the kinds of work the refugees found in the U. S., its status, and what factors influenced economic adjustment more generally.

Kinds of Jobs Performed by the Former Soviet and Vietnamese Samples: Our questionnaires included assessments of the kinds of jobs refugees held since arriving in the U.S. Table 6 outlines the most frequently held jobs at the time of data collection for former Soviets and Table 7 for Vietnamese. The Socio-Economic Indicator (SEI) code provides an index of job status, with a score of 100 being highest status and zero lowest. The index considers relative prestige of jobs, salary, and level of education required for each job in the U.S. context (Entwisle & Astone, 1994). Several aspects of this list are worth noting. First, the types and status of jobs held by former Soviets are very diverse. A number occupy such low status jobs as labor-construction, salesperson, and taxi driver. However, there are a larger number whose jobs suggest considerable economic and status achievement, including teachers, accountants, engineers, and programmers. Of these positions by far the greatest number are in computer programming, a job that combines both excellent economic compensation and requires less competence in English as a prerequisite for functioning well on the job.

TABLE 6:

MOST FREQUENTLY HELD CURRENT JOBS BY FORMER SOVIET ADULTS

Current Job Held By Field/Industry	N	%	SEI Code
Programming:			
Programmer / Senior Programmer	80	18%	76.31 – 83.65
Office work:			
Clerk	19	4%	31.35 – 37.72
Customer Service Representative	11	2%	40.18
Health occupations:			
Health aid	13	3%	29.29 – 36.51
Medical Assistant	12	3%	36.51 – 52.45
Accounting:			
Accountant Assistant	9	2%	37.95
Accountant	7	2%	76.43
Labor/construction:			
Assembler / Laborer	20	5%	26.72 – 37.29
Sales:			
Salesperson	11	2%	33.87
Cashier	9	2%	33.06
Driver:			
Taxi/Truck/other	17	4%	33.21 – 38.40
Teaching:			
Teacher	10	2%	79.9 – 80.24
Teacher's Aid	7	2%	36.92

Technical/engineering/mechanical:			
Auto mechanic/Mechanic	18	4%	32.28 – 45.29
Technician	16	4%	47.04 – 66.08
Engineer	9	2%	86.64 – 93.04
Maintenance Worker	7	2%	38.22
Other	141	29%	
Unemployed	37	8%	
TOTAL	453	100%	

TABLE 7:
MOST FREQUENTLY HELD CURRENT JOBS BY VIETNAMESE ADULTS

Current Job Held By Field/Industry	**N**	**%**	**SEI Code**
Labor/construction:			
Assembler / Laborer	21	20%	22.68 – 36.50
Beauty care:			
Hair stylist/manicurist	13	12.4%	26.39 –29.82
Programming:			
Programmer / Senior Programmer	5	4.7%	76.31 – 79.81
Technical/engineering/mechanical:			
Auto mechanic/mechanical	6	5.7%	32.28 – 38.97
Technician	6	5.7%	60.52 – 66.08
Engineer	3	2.8%	86.64 – 87.90
Maintenance Worker	2	1.9%	38.20 – 44.66
Food/clothing industry:			
Cook/Baker	7	6.7%	27.53 – 29.33
Dishwasher	2	1.9%	29.09
Seamstress	2	1.9%	17.11 – 25.52
Housekeeping:			
Maid/custodian	5	4.8%	28.37 – 31.37
Laundry service	2	1.9%	29.21
Civil service:			
Postal worker	2	1.9%	53.90
Office work:			
Clerk/secretary	5	4.8%	33.06 – 38.40
Other	24	22.9%	
TOTAL	105	100%	

The Vietnamese job listings found in Table 7 suggest a similar range of jobs in terms of SEI. While some are in programming and engineering positions, they are fewer than in the former Soviet sample. Rather, the distribution of jobs is skewed more toward lower status positions in such fields as construction, beauty care, and housekeeping. In addition, the kinds of positions seem to reflect a more gender differentiated set of jobs in this sample compared to the former Soviet sample, with women involved in such areas as beauty care to a greater degree than in the former Soviet sample.

Job Satisfaction: In both groups adults who were working were asked to rate their satisfaction with their current job. Results are found in Table 8.

TABLE 8: JOB SATISFACTION
(1 = not satisfied at all, 5 = very satisfied)

	FORMER SOVIETS N=415		VIETNAMESE N=157	
	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Total Job satisfaction	3.35	.86	3.41	.83
Job satisfaction: number of working hours.	3.96	1.129	3.70	1.010
Job satisfaction: work schedule.	3.90	1.153	3.69	.953
Job satisfaction: working conditions.	3.64	1.116	3.55	1.016
Job satisfaction: fear of losing your job/stability.	3.54	1.084	3.16	1.078
Job satisfaction: stress (tension) at work.	3.32	1.166	2.92	1.130
Job satisfaction: professional status.	3.30	1.277	3.28	1.006
Job satisfaction: medical insurance given by job.	3.22	1.617	3.76	1.218
Job satisfaction: satisfaction from work.	3.18	1.308	3.65	1.002
Job satisfaction: way of life which your salary affords.	3.10	1.087	3.37	1.052
Job satisfaction: intellectual stimulation.	2.91	1.335	3.14	1.106
Job satisfaction: pension.	2.80	1.586	3.55	1.253

Overall level of job satisfaction is comparable in the two groups, despite the differences in overall job status. In addition, it is above the midpoint of the scale, suggesting a greater than average level of satisfaction. The questions asked in job satisfaction inventory appear in Table 8. While the two groups are equivalent in overall job satisfaction, there are differences in their responses to specific job aspects. For example, former Soviet adults report less job satisfaction in terms of the lifestyle the salary affords, the degree of intellectual stimulation in the job, the satisfaction derived from the type of work done, and less satisfaction with medical benefits and

pensions. Vietnamese adults, on the other hand, report less satisfaction with the number of hours worked, the work schedule, and the amount of stress on the job. Indeed, level of satisfaction with the amount of stress on the job was the lowest rated of all the job aspects by the Vietnamese sample.

Together, these findings suggest that the two groups have quite different expectations of what work should be and should provide them. Former Soviet adults seem more concerned with salary, benefits, and intellectual stimulation than Vietnamese in spite of having jobs that are of higher status and higher pay. Vietnamese, on the other hand, seem to be working under conditions that are more trying in terms of hours and schedule, and stress.

Employment Trajectory: In addition to asking about current jobs, we also asked about prior jobs, beginning with their first job after arriving in the United States. We coded each of these jobs n terms of SEI to assess the job trajectories over time. In addition, we asked about how closely the jobs approximated jobs they had held before immigration to assess the degree to which their previous experience and competencies were useful in the new country. Finally, we asked about where they found out about jobs, in an effort to understand the respective roles of formal agencies and informal networks in the job finding process over time. Table 9 reports on these findings for former Soviets and Table 10 for Vietnamese.

TABLE 9: EMPLOYMENT TRAJECTORY OF FORMER SOVIET ADULTS

	JOB 1	JOB 2	JOB 3	JOB 4	JOB 5	JOB 6
N	419	292	174	87	43	21
SEI code	40.8	47.4	55.4	57.1	60.7	65.6
Ave time at job (IN YEARS)	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.1
How close is job to specialty in FSU (1=exactly, 5=not at all)	4.1	3.7	3.5	3.2	3.2	2.6
HOW FOUND JOB:						
Private Employment Agency	2%	5%	5%	2%	0%	0%
Resettlement Agency	41%	21%	14%	8%	0%	0%
Russian Friends	27%	33%	29%	25%	30%	22%
American friends	5%	7%	3%	10%	13%	11%
Self/newspaper	21%	27%	44%	46%	56%	67%
Other	5%	7%	6%	10%	0%	0%
Other émigrés there? Yes	67%	64%	65%	56%	57%	71%

(A) Former Soviet Sample: In the former Soviet sample, data were available for individuals who held as many as 6 different jobs since immigration. Only a small number held as many as 6 jobs (21 or about 5% of the total sample). Several other aspects of the table present useful information on the employment trajectory. First, with each successive job comes an increase in job status as reflected in the SEI code. The initial SEI code of 40.8 represents a relatively low job

status comparable to auto mechanics or medical assistants. However, each successive position represents an advance, such that the job status at the sixth job is comparable to an experienced technician. In addition, data on the average length of time per job suggest that job mobility occurred relatively frequently, with the first two jobs being held an average of 1.6 years each and subsequent jobs for less time. This pattern seems to indicate that positions taken early in the immigration process were taken to gain a foothold from which to seek other positions.

Furthermore, the initial jobs taken by these refugees are very far from the kind of jobs they held in the Former Soviet Union (4.1 on a 5 point scale where 5=not at all like your specialty in the Former Soviet Union). However, each successive job switch is rated as closer to the kind of job held in the Former Soviet Union before immigration. Still, even after 6 jobs, the mean of 2.6 suggests that one of the major transitions related to economic adaptation is the changing not only of specific jobs but of occupations per se. For a highly educated group, as these refugees are, this represents a major issue in the transition process.

With respect to the job finding process, the initial position was most often located with the help of the local resettlement agency, with Russian friends the next most important source. Over time, the resettlement agency became unimportant, Russian friends remained a significant source, and individual efforts increased. Thus, self-reliance with respect to agency help increased over time, while the refugee friendship network remained a consistent source of help in the job finding process. In addition, regardless of the number of jobs reported, a majority of jobs employed other Soviet refugees as well. Surprisingly, this percentage did not decrease over time.

TABLE 10: EMPLOYMENT TRAJECTORY OF VIETNAMESE

	JOB 1	**JOB 2**	**JOB 3**
N	142	81	31
SEI code	31.04	32.52	34.32
Ave time at job (IN YEARS)	2.9	2.4	2.6
How close is job to specialty in Vietnam (1=exactly, 5=not at all)	4.5	4.6	4.4
HOW FOUND JOB:			
Private Employment Agency	2%	.5%	.5%
Resettlement Agency	3%	.5%	0%
Vietnamese Friends	46.5%	48%	40.5%
American friends	5%	7.5%	12.5%
Community-based organization	2%	2.5%	0%
County social services	12%	7.5%	3%
Self/newspaper	15%	25%	25%
Family/relatives	13%	4%	9.5%
Other	1.5%	4.5%	9%
Other émigrés there? Yes	83%	75%	65%

(B) Vietnamese Sample: The data on the Vietnamese employment trajectory present a contrasting portrait to the Former Soviet sample in several ways (see Table 10). First, data are available on only three jobs, including the initial and current jobs. This is in part because, on average, Vietnamese refugees remain in the same jobs substantially longer than Soviet refugees, suggesting a relative lack of upward mobility over time. Further, compared to the former Soviet sample, the Vietnamese adults entered the job market at lower positions and remained at a relatively low economic level over time. The average job was equivalent to that of a construction worker or auto mechanic (see Table 7). Further, the jobs taken in the United States were almost totally different from those help in Vietnam (4.4 to 4.6 on a 5 point scale with 5= not at all close to specialty in Vietnam). This contrasts starkly with the progress over time of the former Soviet sample. By contrast, obtaining a job in a field or specialty similar to that held prior to migration may not have been as important for the Vietnamese sample as it was for the former Soviets, who were hoping to re-establish job status comparable to what they had attained in the Former Soviet Union. Taken together the picture for the Vietnamese adults in our sample is one of economic struggle in terms of job status and huge upheaval in terms of the kind of work engaged in compared to their work in Vietnam.

With respect to the job finding process, the Vietnamese sample also differs from the Soviet refugee sample. Here, resettlement agency contributions to finding a job are reported as relatively insignificant even with respect to the first job, although 12% report that community-based organizations aided their getting a first job. Rather, Vietnamese friends and family account for over 50% of the reported jobs overall, a considerably larger percentage than was found in the former Soviet sample. In addition, across jobs, the percentage found by the individual and/or through the newspaper was consistently smaller for the Vietnamese refugees than for the Soviets. The role of friends and social networks in job finding is further suggested by the large percentage of first jobs that employed other Vietnamese refugees (83%). Thus, in terms of job finding, the data indicate that social connections were more important for Vietnamese refugees compared to former Soviets, and that these factors remain more important for finding subsequent jobs as well.

Predictors of Economic Adaptation: To examine what factors are most important in predicting positive economic adaptation, we conducted multiple regression analyses to predict current job satisfaction and prestige/status of current job held. While details of these analyses are found in prior reports, here we compare findings across the Vietnamese and former Soviet samples. Figure 4 depicts factors influencing current job satisfaction for the Vietnamese and former Soviet samples. Figure 5 depicts factors influencing current SEI status for the two samples.

With respect to factors influencing job satisfaction, the only consistent predictor across samples was the prestige/status of the current job. Thus, both groups reported higher satisfaction in more prestigious jobs. However, for the former Soviet sample, higher levels of American acculturation were also related to greater job satisfaction whereas they were not in the Vietnamese sample. This may reflect the value of such acculturation in the higher status jobs held in general by the former Soviet sample, where knowledge of American customs and English fluency may be more important to success in the job.

In both samples higher levels of education in the country of origin predicted higher status of current jobs. The status of the first job held in U.S. also predicted status of current job held for both refugee samples. That is, those who started with a higher status job continued to have higher status jobs over time. However, there were several differences between the two groups as well. Time in the U.S. was related to higher job status for the former Soviet but not the Vietnamese sample, suggesting economic progress over time for the former Soviet but less so for the Vietnamese sample. This pattern was seen earlier in the relative lack of SEI progress from job 1 to subsequent jobs in the Vietnamese sample compared to their former Soviet counterparts. In addition, English language competence was related to SEI for the former Soviet but not the Vietnamese sample. Finally, Vietnamese behavioral acculturation, retaining Vietnamese behavioral practices, was negatively related to level of job status, whereas no relationship of any aspect of Russian acculturation was related to job status. The implication of this is that for former Soviets, behavioral acculturation to Russian culture, which includes having Russian friends, does not impact on their economic success, whereas for Vietnamese refugees continuing to participate in Vietnamese culture behaviorally may be holding them back from attaining higher job status. Together, these findings provide further evidence of the different worlds of work of the former Soviet and Vietnamese refugees.

Figure 4: Factors influencing job satisfaction for former Soviet (illustrated by dotted lines) and Vietnamese refugees (illustrated by dashed line)

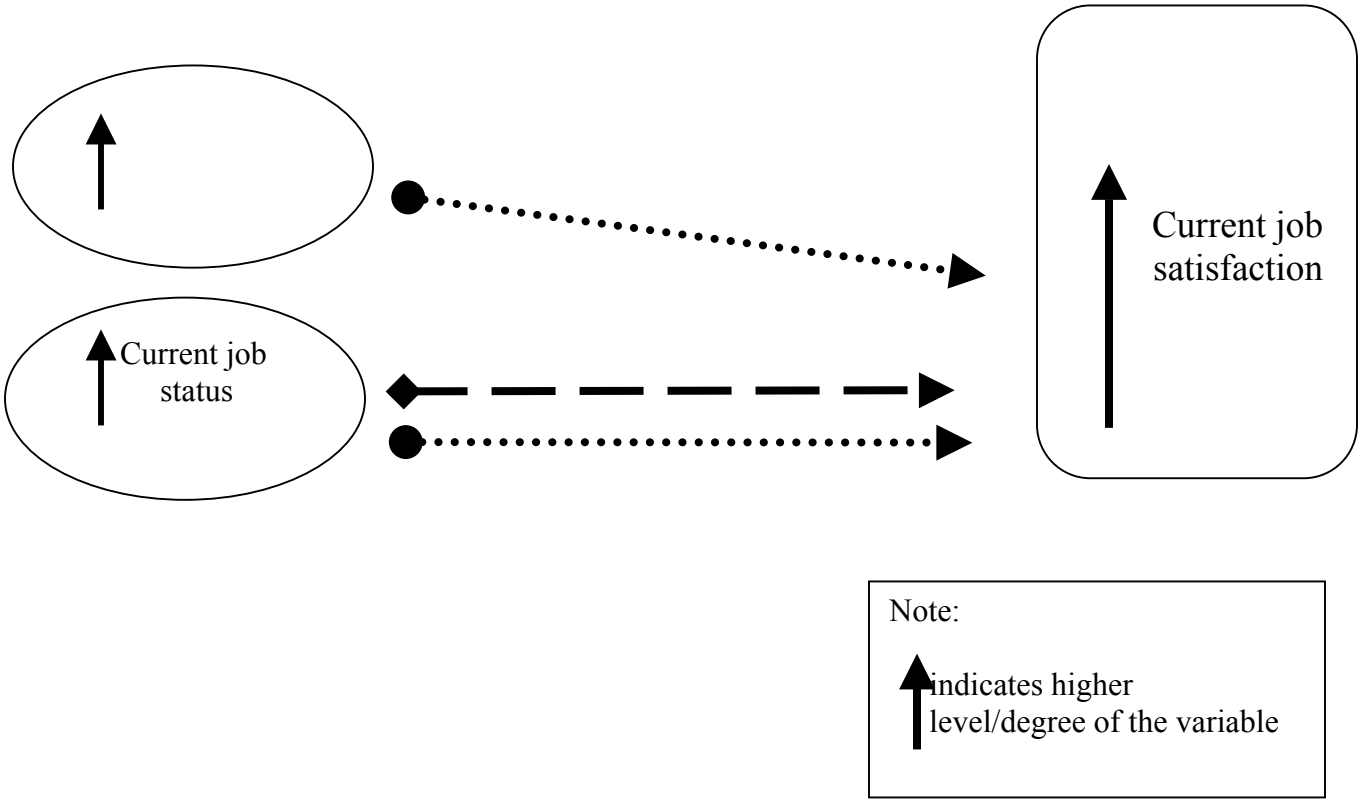
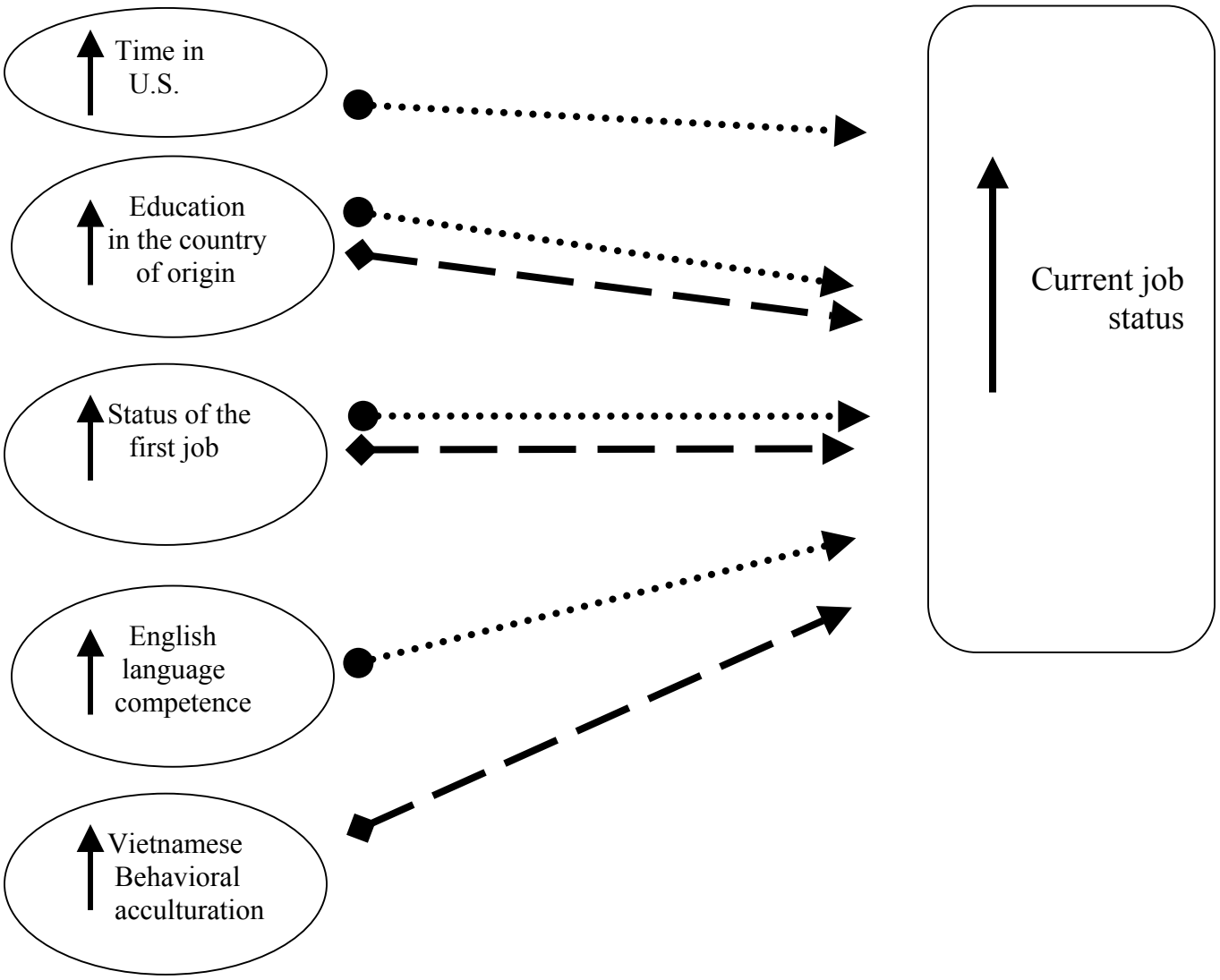


Figure 5: Factors influencing current job status for former Soviet (illustrated by dotted lines) and Vietnamese refugees (illustrated by dashed line)



SECTION II
FORMER SOVIET AND VIETNAMESE ADOLESCENTS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Data were reported on former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents in prior separate reports. The current chapter reports on a comparison of much of this data and provides some additional data on educational expectations not found in prior reports.

Sample Characteristics and Differences

As described in prior reports, the sampling strategies for the former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents differed. With respect to the former Soviet samples, agency lists of resettled refugees allowed us to develop a representative sample of men and women 29 to 65 years old. The former Soviet adolescent sample consisted of all those adolescents in the families of the former Soviet adult sample. In contrast, the Vietnamese sample was selected to include as many families with adolescent children as possible. Characteristics of the samples obtained through these strategies are found in Table 11.

TABLE 11: ADOLESCENT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

FORMER SOVIET ADOLESCENTS (N=132)		**VIETNAMESE ADOLESCENTS (N=159)**	
Variable	**Percent or Mean**	**Variable**	**Percent or Mean**
Gender Male Female	 58% 42%	Gender Male Female	 53% 47%
Age	15 (range 10-19)	Age	16 (range 12-20)
Age of Arrival	9.2 (range 1.3 years to 16.7 years)	Age of Arrival Note: 25% were born in the U.S.	8.7 (range 9 months -17 years)
Length of Time in U.S.	5.7 (range 5 months to 10.8 years)	Length of Time in U.S.	7.5 Years (range 9 months to 17 years)
Grade Level (average)	9	Grade Level (average)	10
Currently in ESOL Ever enrolled in ESOL Months spent in ESOL	12% 82% 12	Currently in ESOL Ever enrolled in ESOL Months spent in ESOL	17% 58% 33
Do you work now	33%	Do you work now	28%

The two samples are of roughly comparable size and age range, with each containing slightly more males than females. While all adolescents in the former Soviet sample were first generation immigrants, twenty five percent of the Vietnamese adolescent sample was born in the United States. The average age of arrival time in the country of the first generation Vietnamese

adolescents was 8.7, and at the time of data gathering had been in the country an average of 7.5 years. The former Soviet adolescents had been in the country an average of somewhat less (average of 5.7 years), but had arrived at about the same age (slightly over 9 years old). While a great majority of both groups had been enrolled in ESL in school, considerably more former Soviet adolescents reported having ever been enrolled in ESL and those in ESL reported being in it considerably less time than did the Vietnamese adolescents. About 30% of the adolescents worked in addition to going to school.

Acculturation

With respect to the acculturation patterns of the two samples, Table 12 provides the descriptive information on the two adolescent samples.

TABLE 12: ACCULTURATION
(1 = NOT AT ALL ACCULTURATED, 4 = VERY MUCH ACCULTURATED)

	FORMER SOVIET ADOLESCENTS		VIETNAMESE ADOLESCENTS	
	American Culture	**Russian Culture**	**American Culture**	**Vietnamese Culture**
Language	3.8	3.2 ***	3.4	2.9 ***
Identity	2.9	3.3 ***	2.9	3.5 ***
Behavioral	3.4	2.4 ***	3.1	3.6 ***
Overall	3.4	3.0 ***	3.1	3.0

*** indicates that differences between American and Russian and American and Vietnamese culture are significant at the $p<.001$ level.

In general, the former Soviet adolescents report greater overall acculturation to American culture than do the Vietnamese adolescents and greater American than Russian acculturation. In contrast, the Vietnamese adolescents are equally acculturated to American and Vietnamese culture.

Both groups report greater language competence in English than in their native language and both identify with their culture of origin more than American culture. However, former Soviet adolescents are on balance behaving in more American than Russian ways, while the reverse is true for the Vietnamese adolescents. The Vietnamese adolescents retain both their cultural identity and behavior more so than the former Soviet adolescents.

In addition, we asked adolescents in both samples to do an overall rating of their self-defined identity in terms of their culture of origin and American culture. Table 13 presents these findings. The results help clarify what was said above. For example, when given the choices found in the table, twice as many former Soviet adolescents defined themselves as more American than Russian than did Vietnamese adolescents given a comparable choice. However, a greater number of Vietnamese defined themselves as identifying equally with both cultures. In addition, generational differences within the Vietnamese sample were found. Thus, more second

generation Vietnamese adolescents reported identifying as more American than did first generation adolescents. However, in both generations the largest percentage identified as being equally American and Vietnamese.

TABLE 13: ACCULTURATION – OVERALL IDENTITY

	Former Soviet	Whole sample Vietnamese	1st generation Vietnamese	2nd generation Vietnamese
Do you consider yourself:		**Percentile**		
More Russian (Vietnamese) than American	29%	31%	34%	23%
More American than Russian (Vietnamese)	32%	16%	12%	28%
Russian (Vietnamese) and American Equally	33%	48%	48%	49%
Neither	5%	3%	4%	0%
Other	2%	2%	2%	0%

Social Integration and Social Support

One aspect of the questionnaire sought information about the degree to which refugee adolescents integrated into American society and developed supportive relationships with U.S. born peers. We thus gathered data on what we call social integration and social support in both populations.

Social Integration: With respect to social integration, for the former Soviet sample we asked about their integration with American friends more generally and American Jewish friends in particular. For the Vietnamese sample we differentiated their networks in terms of different ethnicities/races of friends. The reasons for these different questions came from interviews with former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents about their social connections in the specific communities in which they resided. Still, overall judgments about comparability of social integration can readily be made. The results of the questions about social integration are found in Table 14.

Table 14: Social Integration				
Former Soviet		Vietnamese	1st gen.	2nd gen.
Question	Mean Percent	Question	Mean Percent	
In the past 3 months, of the best friends at school:		**In the past 3 months, of the** best friends at school:		
Russian	**37%**			
% that are Jewish	**75%**	**White**	**20%**	**28%**
		Black	**16%**	**13%**
American	**52%**	**Latino**	**12%**	**9%**
% That are Jewish	**47%**	**Asian**	**49%**	**46%**
		% that are Vietnamese		**42%**
Other	**11%**	**Other**	**54%**	**6%**
% That are Jewish	**14%**		**4%**	
Of the kinds outside of school evenings or weekends:		**Of the** kinds outside of school evenings or weekends:		
Russian	**50%**			
% that are Jewish	**16%**			
		White	**14%**	**22%**
American	**42%**	**Black**	**16%**	**10%**
% That are Jewish	**39%**	**Latino**	**9%**	**12%**
		Asian	**59%**	**54%**
Other	**8%**	**% that are Vietnamese**		**52%**
% That are Jewish	**17%**	**Other**	**70%**	**3%**
			3%	
Of your three closest friends:		**Of your** three closest friends:		
Russian	**54%**			
% that are Jewish	**77%**			
		White	**15%**	**24%**
American	**34%**	**Black**	**10%**	**6%**
% That are Jewish	**50%**	**Latino**	**9%**	**5%**
		Asian	**62%**	**66%**
Other	**12%**	**% that are Vietnamese**		
% That are Jewish	**19%**	**Other**	**66%**	**42%**
			4%	**.5%**
% in total network (mean of 3 items above**):**		**% in total network (**mean of 3 items above**):**		
Russian	**47%**			
% that are Jewish	**56%**	**White**	**16%**	**24%**
		Black	**14%**	**10%**
American	**42%**	**Latino**	**10%**	**8%**
% That are Jewish	**45%**	**Asian**	**56%**	**55%**
		% that are Vietnamese		
Other	**10%**	**Other**	**63%**	**45%**

% That are Jewish	16%		4%	3%

Interviews with both former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents suggested that friendships are distinguishable in terms of "in school" friends, "out of school" friends, and closest friends. Table 14 reflects these distinctions. With respect to social integration, former Soviet adolescents report more American than former Soviet "in school" friends but more Russian "out of school" friendships and close friends. Still, the relatively high percentage of American friends in each category suggests considerable social integration into American peer networks. In addition, it appears that this integration is not primarily into the American Jewish community, as an overall majority of the American friends are not Jewish.

The Vietnamese data are broken down in terms of generational status (see Table 14). Perhaps surprisingly, the percentage of Vietnamese friends is comparable across generations for each of the three categories of "in school", "out of school", and close friends. Thus, there does not seem to be a generational difference in terms of social integration with American peers in this sample. As with the former Soviet sample, the greatest degree of social integration with American peers occurred at school while the least social integration with American peers involved close friends. In addition, it appears that considerable social integration occurs across White, Black, and Latino peers, though somewhat more White friends are reported both at school and as close friends.

The most appropriate comparison of the social integration of the former Soviet and Vietnamese samples involves the former Soviet and first generation data. Here, Vietnamese social integration is slightly less than that of the former Soviet adolescents in each of the three categories. However, the differences are not large, with the possible exception of closest friends, where 24% of the Vietnamese sample and 34% of the Former Soviet sample are Americans.

Social Support: Table 15 presents the data on the various sources of social support received from both groups of adolescents.

TABLE 15: SOCIAL SUPPORT
(1 = do not provide support, 3 = provide a great deal of support)

FORMER SOVIET ADOLESCENTS		VIETNAMESE ADOLESCENTS	
Support received from:	**Means**	**Support received from:**	**Means**
Mother	2.6	Mother	2.4
Father	2.5	Father	2.3
Group of close American friends	2.3	Group of non-Asian friends	2.0
Group of close Russian friends	2.2	Group of close Vietnamese friends	2.2
Grandmother(s)	2.2	Grandmother(s)	1.6
Grandfather(s)	2.0	Grandfather(s)	1.5
Russian kids your age	2.0	Vietnamese kids your age	2.0
American kids your age	2.0	Group of Asian friends	2.2
School Personnel (1 low, 5 high)	2.9	School Personnel (1 low, 5 high)	3.0

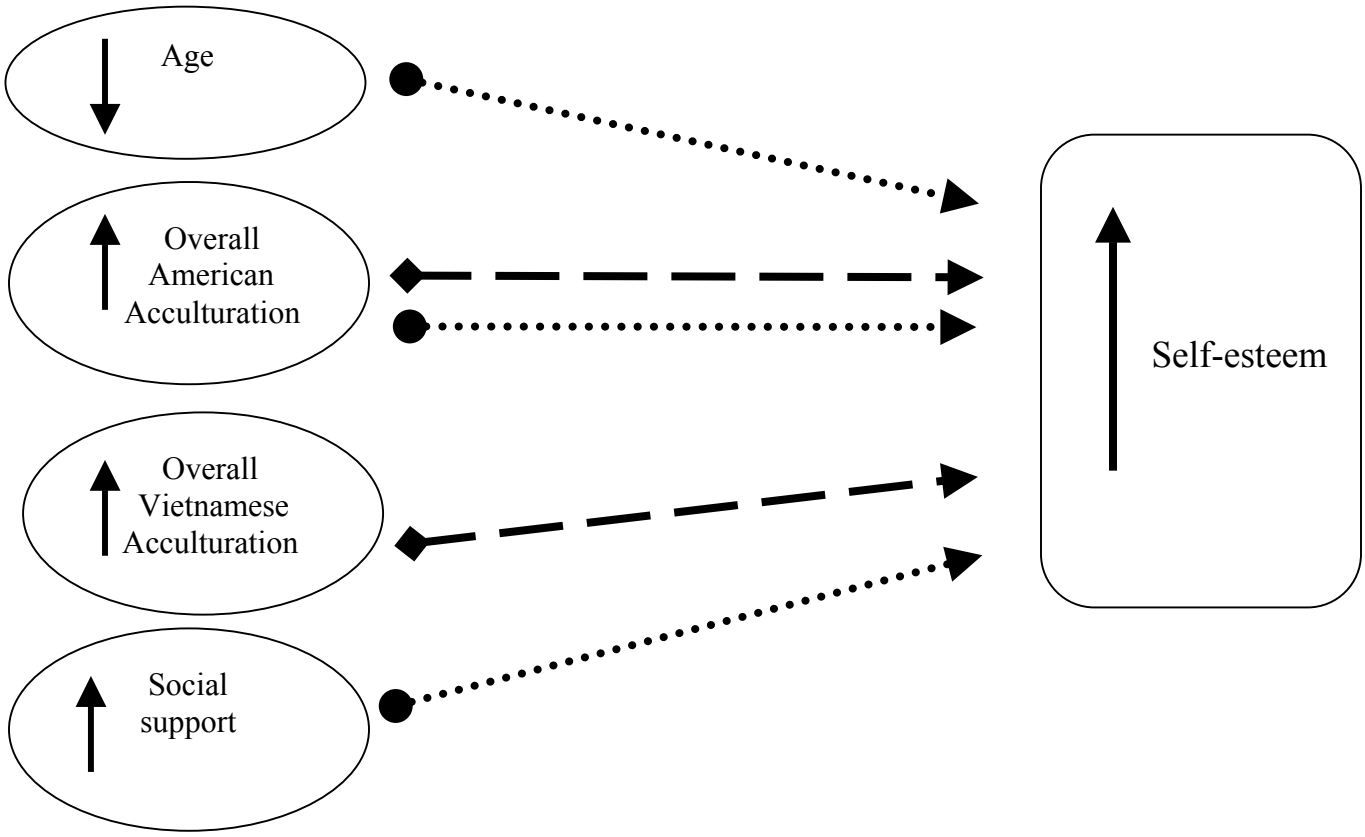
Parents were rated by both groups as being most supportive, followed by close friends from the culture of origin and, for former Soviet adolescents, close American friends. Unfortunately, we did not ask Vietnamese adolescents about this specific category. In each of these instances support was rated quite highly (2 or more on a 3-point scale where 3 represented the greatest amount of support). Grandparents were rated as more supportive by former Soviet than by Vietnamese adolescents. Support from school personnel was rated similarly by the two groups, around the midpoint of a 5-point scale, suggesting less support from school personnel than from personal relationships with family and peers.

Psychological Adjustment

While more extensive data on the psychological adjustment of the two samples is found in the individual reports on former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents, the only comparable measure we have across the two samples is that of self-esteem. There is a general concern in the psychological literature about the meaning of self-esteem in countries described as collectivistic, in that the very concept of self is seen as having a collective as well as individual component. Thus, some caution about interpretation is indicated here. However, on this measure the former Soviet adolescent score slightly higher than the Vietnamese adolescents (3.1 to 2.9 on a 4-point scale), and both groups score considerably higher than the midpoint of the scale.

We also conducted multiple regression analyses to discover what the predictors of self-esteem were in the two samples. Results of these analyses are illustrated by Figure 6. For both former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents, greater levels of overall American acculturation contributed to higher self-esteem. However, for the Vietnamese adolescents, great retention of overall Vietnamese culture in terms of language, identity, and behavior also contributed to greater self-esteem, whereas retention of the overall Russian culture did not do so for former Soviet adolescents. In addition, for former Soviet adolescents the total amount of social support received from family and friends was related to higher self-esteem. Younger Vietnamese adolescents had greater self-esteem than did older adolescents.

Figure 6: Factors influencing esteem or former Soviet (illustrated by dotted lines) and Vietnamese refugees (illustrated by dashed line)



Note: ↓ indicates lower level/degree of the variable

↑ indicates higher level/degree of the variable

Acculturative Hassles

One of the hallmarks of the acculturation process for adolescents involves the ways in which their environments cause them hassles or stressors related to their status as immigrants or refugees. Our initial work with former Soviet adolescents involved the creation of an acculturative hassles scale, developed through a review or relevant scholarly literature and a series of interviews with these adolescents (Vinokurov, Trickett, & Birman, 2002). Before collecting our subsequent data on Vietnamese refugee adolescents, we asked a group of them to look over the hassles measure developed for former Soviet adolescents and comment on its relevance and completeness in terms of their own experience. This process modified only slightly the original instrument, thus allowing quite comparable data on acculturative hassles in the two populations. Table 16 presents data on both the frequency with which the hassle was experienced and how intense, or stressful, it was. Intensity was rated on a 4-point scale, from not at all stressful (1) to very stressful (4).

TABLE 16: ACCULTURATIVE HASSLES

	FORMER SOVIET		VIETNAMESE	
Problem/Issue	**% reported**	**Hassle intensity**	**% reported**	**Hassle intensity**
Most frequently experienced hassles by > 50%:				
A teacher didn't pronounce their name correctly	76%	2.3	71%	2.2
Having to translate for other family members: phone calls, mail, bills, TV	75%	2.0	52%	2.1
Parents told to speak, read, or write in Russian (Vietnamese)	69%	2.5	59%	2.4
You heard people saying bad things or making jokes about Russians (Vietnamese)	61%	2.6	--	--
Parents didn't let them do something that an American friend's parents let them do	54%	2.9	60%	2.8
Couldn't explain something to parents because they don't understand American culture	52%	2.7	--	--
Had to explain American culture to parents	51%	2.4	--	--
An American student didn't pronounce your name correctly	51%	2.0	--	--
Parents pressured to do well in school	--	--	82%	2.7
Inability to explain something to parents, because they don't understand American culture	--	--	54%	2.8

The table reports the most frequently encountered hassles; those reported by over 50% of the adolescents, as occurring in the month prior to gathering the data. Each group reported several hassles over 50%. As seen in Table 16, there is both significant overlap as well as distinctive hassles in each level for Former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents.

With respect to frequency of acculturative hassles, the most frequent hassle for former Soviets and second most important for Vietnamese was a teacher not being able to pronounce their name correctly. The most frequent Vietnamese hassle involved parental pressure to do well in school. For former Soviet adolescents the other oft encountered hassles focused primarily of parent-related issues in terms of culture brokering or conflicts between what American parents let their children do as compared to what former Soviet parents allowed. In addition, however, perceived discrimination or belittling in the school context also surfaced for former Soviet adolescents. For the Vietnamese adolescents, all of the frequently encountered hassles involved parents. Here, culture broker issues and parental pressures related to retaining the Vietnamese language were prominent.

With respect to the intensity of the hassle, or the degree of stress it caused, the most intense hassles for both groups involved parents. Both Former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents rated the same two hassles as most stressful: not being able to do something that their American friends' parents let their children do and not being able to explain something to their parents because parents did not understand American culture.

School Adjustment and Educational Expectations and Aspirations

In the area of school adaptation, we assessed academic achievement, sense of belonging in the school, and support from school personnel in both our samples. Academic achievement was measured by grade point average. Sense of school belonging was designed to measure feeling comfortable with the school experience. Support from school personnel was included as a measure of school support for these refugee adolescents. In addition, we gathered information on their educational aspirations and their perceptions of what their parents expected of them as well.

Grades, Sense of School Belonging, and School Support**: Data on each of the groups on these measures is found in Table 17.**

TABLE 17: SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT

	Former Soviet adolescents	**Vietnamese adolescents**
	Mean	
GPA	3.5	3.4
Sense of School Involvement/School Belonging (1=low, 5=high)	3.8	3.7
Support from School Personnel (1=low, 5= high)	2.9	3.0
Support from Peers (1=low, 5= high)	3.3	3.4

With respect to grades, the two samples are both comparable and doing well in school, with an average grade point average of 3.4-3.5, between a B and an A average. Moreover, both groups report a considerable sense of belonging in the school, 3.7-3.8 a 5-point scale where 5 represents

the strongest sense of school belonging. Thus, in terms of academic achievement and psychological comfort in the school, both groups report doing well.

With respect to social support in the school context, we asked about support received from out-of-class school personnel (rather than during class from teachers). Table 17 shows that the degree of support received from both peers and school personnel is quite comparable across groups. Peer support is considerably higher than support from school personnel.

Educational Expectations and Aspirations: The school has traditionally been seen as the vehicle for upward mobility of all citizens, but perhaps particularly so for immigrant and refugee children. Thus, the expectations of parents for their children, as well as the children's perceptions of what their parents expected of them, represent important aspects of the educational experience. We asked adolescents about both their own expectations and those of their parents for their educational achievement. Table 18 provides the data on how these adolescents viewed their own expectations and their perceptions of their parents' expectations for their educational achievement.

TABLE 18: SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

	Former Soviet Adolescents	**Vietnamese Adolescents**
	Mean (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree)	
Perception that parents expect child to succeed in school	4.3	4.4
Perception that parents expect child to be best child in class	3.9	3.7

As seen in the School Expectations section of the table, both Former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents see their parents as having comparable and very high expectations for their educational achievement. While our Former Soviet adult sample is highly educated in their country of origin, our Vietnamese sample was, on average, much less so. Thus, the high parental expectations experienced by adolescents in both groups come from parents with quite different overall education levels themselves. The Vietnamese parent expectation seemingly corresponds to the previous finding that the most frequently cited hassle for Vietnamese adolescents involved parental pressure to do well in school. Regardless, adolescents in both groups believe that their parents expect them not only to succeed in school, but also, to a somewhat lesser though still important extent, to be the best in their class while doing so.

These expectations are further supported in the subsequent data in Table 19 on educational aspirations. As with expectations, the level of educational aspirations is both comparable and very high across both groups. As seen by these adolescents, over 90% of both former Soviet and Vietnamese parents want their children to graduate from college, and almost 2/3 of the former Soviet parents and 6 of 10 of the Vietnamese parents would like their children to complete post-graduate education.

Their own aspirations closely parallel their parents' expectations. With respect to how far adolescents hoped to go in their education, over 90% of both groups said they aspire to a college degree or better, with 58% and 62% of former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents respectively hoping to graduate from a law, medical, or graduate school after finishing college. When asked how far they expected to go, compared with how far they would like to go, the percentages respective to becoming a college graduate were again over 90% in both groups. However, slightly fewer adolescents in both groups thought they would actually graduate from a law, medical, or graduate school after completing college. Still, over half the former Soviet sample, and 45% of the Vietnamese sample, acknowledged this as a clear expectation. Thus, there can be little question of the high educational expectations and aspirations of both groups. Their academic success, as measured by GPA in high school, suggests that these goals are not unrealistic.

TABLE 19: EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

	Former Soviet Adolescents	**Vietnamese Adolescents**
	Percentile or Mean	
How far Parents would like child to go in school		
1) Finish some high school	0%	1%
2) Graduate from high school	3%	3%
3) Graduate from a 2 year college	5%	1%
4) Graduate from a 4 year college	29%	36%
5) Graduate from a law, medical, or graduate school	64%	59%
OVERALL MEAN	4.5	4.5
How far Adolescents would like to go in school:		
1) Finish some high school	1%	0%
2) Graduate from high school	4%	3%
3) Graduate from a 2-year college	4%	2%
4) Graduate from a 4-year college	33%	33%
5) Graduate from a law, medical, or graduate school	58%	62%
OVERALL MEAN	4.4	4.5

How far Adolescents expect to go in school:		
1) Finish some high school	1%	1%
2) Graduate from high school	3%	3%
3) Graduate from a 2-year college	7%	3%
4) Graduate from a 4-year college	36%	48%
5) Graduate from a law, medical, or graduate school	53%	45%
OVERALL MEAN	4.4	4.3

Section III
Family Level Phenomena:
Family Environment: The Acculturation Gap and the Culture Broker Role

Previous sections of this comparative report have focused attention on comparisons of former Soviet and Vietnamese adults and adolescents. This final section focuses again on a comparison of former Soviet and Vietnamese refugees, but here we look at three specific family level issues in the acculturation and adaptation of these adults and adolescents: (1) the family environment, (2) the acculturation gap between parents and children and (3) the culture broker role of adolescents in these refugee families. Each involves data on both adults and adolescents, as contrasted with the separate treatment of adults and adolescents in the prior sections of this report. Since not all of the adults in the two samples had adolescent children who also participated in our study, the family level analyses included only those families with at least one parent and one child in our study.

Family Environment

We asked adolescents and parents in both samples to rate a variety of aspects of their family lives. Family environment was assessed in the former Soviet sample with the conflict and cohesion subscales of the Family Environment Scale for both adolescents and their parents (Moos & Moos, 1976). These two scales assess the degree to which conflict is evident in the family and the degree to which the family functions as a cohesive and supportive unit. For the Vietnamese sample we used the FACES scale (Olson, 1986) to assess family cohesion and family adaptability for both adolescents and their parents. The cohesion scale is comparable though not identical across samples. The concept of family adaptability refers to the sharing of responsibility among family members depending on the adaptive requirements of the situation.

Results of these measures for both former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents and parents are found in Table 20. Higher scores on the measures indicate a greater degree of emphasis in the family placed on that aspect of the family environment. Soviet adolescents and parents rated family cohesion as very high (well above the midpoint of the scale) and family conflict as low (below the midpoint of the scale). Parents rated cohesion as slightly higher than did their children, while parents and children rated conflict equally.

Among Vietnamese adolescents and their parents, the family was rated as quite high on family cohesion and much less so on family adaptability. Thus, both Vietnamese adolescents and parents view their family more as a cohesive unit rather than as reflecting a shared sense of flexile responding to varying situations. As was the case with the former Soviet families, Vietnamese parents rated the family as more cohesive than did their adolescent children and more adaptable as well.

Adolescents in both groups were also asked to fill out a measure of overall satisfaction with the family. Table 20 also includes these results.

TABLE 20: FAMILY FUNCTIONING				
	Former Soviet Adolescents (N = 130)	**Former Soviet Parents (N=122)**	**Vietnamese Adolescents (N=104)**	**Vietnamese Parents (N = 82)**
	Mean			
Family Functioning Total Scale (1= almost never happens, 5 = almost always happens)			2.8	3.3
Family Cohesion (1= almost never happens, 5 = almost always happens)			3.3	3.8
Family Adaptability (1= almost never happens, 5 = almost always happens)			2.4	2.7
Family Conflict (1= True, 0 = False)	.29	.28		
Family Cohesion (1= True, 0 = False)	.73	.89		
Family Satisfaction (1 low, 5 high)	3.5		3.2	

With respect to overall family satisfaction, both groups score above the midpoint of the scale, suggesting a generally positive level of family satisfaction. However, the former Soviet adolescents report somewhat greater satisfaction than do the Vietnamese adolescents.

In addition to assessing family satisfaction, we also asked adolescents and their parents in both groups to report on the kinds of issues that caused conflict in the family. Table 21 outlines the results of this inquiry in terms of the frequency of reported problems as well as their intensity, or how stressful they were, for adolescents. Table 22 outlines the results of this inquiry for the parents. The tables report on both frequently reported problems (those expressed by over 80% of the two adolescents groups and the former Soviet parents and by over 70% of the Vietnamese parents) and problems reported less than 50% of the time.

TABLE 21: ISSUES CAUSING CONFLICT IN FAMILIES: ADOLESCENT PERSPECTIVE					
Former Soviet Adolescents			**Vietnamese Adolescents**		
Average number of issues reported		15	**Average number of issues reported**		17
Issues over which more than 80% of adolescents reported they disagree with their parents:		Intensity (1 = low, 4= high)	**Issues over which more than 80% of adolescents reported they disagree with their parents:**		Intensity (1 = low, 4= high)
Chores at home	81%	2.6	Chores at home	89%	2.4
School grades/homework	85%	2.5	School grades/homework	85%	2.5
How spend free time	86%	2.7	How spend free time	85%	2.7
Money	80%	1.9	Money	83%	2.0
			Clothes and/or appearance	83%	2.3
			Curfews	82%	2.6
			Attitudes/respect	82%	2.5
			Fighting with siblings	81%	2.5
			Swearing talking back	80%	2.4

TABLE 22: ISSUES CAUSING CONFLICT IN FAMILIES: PARENT PERSPECTIVE					
FORMER SOVIET PARENTS			**VIETNAMESE PARENTS**		
Average number of issues reported		14	**Average number of issues reported**		13
Issues over which more than 80% of parents reported they disagree with their children:		Intensity (1 = low, 4= high)	**Issues over which more than 70% of parents reported they disagree with their children:**		Intensity (1 = low, 4= high)
Chores at home	85%	2.6	Chores at home	71%	2.6
How spend free time	84%	2.4			
School grades/homework	80%	2.2			
Movies/TV	80%	2.3	Movies/TV	71%	2.0
			Clothes and/or appearance	75%	1.8
			Choice of friends	75%	2.0

Our data suggest that for adolescents and parents in both groups, a considerable amount of adolescent/parent disagreement was evident. Parents tended to report fewer disagreements than adolescents in both groups. Former Soviet adolescents reported an average of 15 sources, and Vietnamese adolescents reported 17 out of the 27. Former Soviet parents reported an average of 14 sources of disagreement, and Vietnamese parents 13 out of 27 possible.

There is also considerable overlap in the nature of the frequently reported problems by both the adolescents and parents across the two samples. Over 80% of adolescents in both groups report family disagreements about doing chores at home, school grades, how to spend free time, and money. In addition, Vietnamese adolescents specify a number of other areas of disagreement, including issues of clothes, attitude and respect for parents, fighting with brothers or sisters, and talking back to parents. W

Concurring with their children, both former Soviet and Vietnamese parents report that chores at home is the most frequently source of disagreement, although more former Soviet (85%) than Vietnamese (71%) parents reported this as an issue. Furthermore, like their adolescent children, less than 50% of the parents in both groups reported disagreements about the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs and trouble with the law. However, more Vietnamese parents reported disagreements over these issues than did the former Soviet parents.

Intensity of problems refers to how much the parents and adolescents said they disagreed about a particular issue, on a scale from 1 to 4. The most intense disagreement in both adolescent groups focuses on how to spend free time, with the related issue of curfews a close second for the Vietnamese adolescent sample. The parents in both groups reported the most intense disagreement over chores at home.

It is difficult if not impossible to separate out issues of acculturation and adjustment in a new country with generational adolescent/parent issues of native-born adolescents and families. Certainly, disagreements over chores, grades, free time, and money characterize shared areas of disagreement in many families not having to deal with immigration. However, it is important not to dismiss these findings as “typical adolescent/family interactions” because they take place in the midst of an acculturation/adaptation process that is important to investigate further. We do so in a subsequent section on the acculturation gap between parents and their children and the culture broker role adopted by most immigrant adolescents.

The Acculturation Gap and Family Functioning

The acculturation gap is a well-described phenomenon in the acculturation literature more broadly. It refers to the gap in levels of acculturation that often occur within families as a result of the children's acculturating at a faster rater than parents. Thus, children are more likely to learn the new language and, because of school attendance, are forced to confront American peers and adults in a more intensive way than their parents. Table 23 presents data comparing acculturation levels of parents and adolescents for both samples.

Table 23: Acculturation Levels of Parents and Adolescents (1 = Not At All Acculturated, 4 = Very Much Acculturated)

American Acculturation				
	Former Soviet (N = 130)		**Vietnamese (N = 104)**	
	Parents	**Adolescents**	**Parents**	**Adolescents**
English Language	2.7	3.8	1.8	3.7
American Identity	2.3	2.9	2.4	2.9
American Behavioral	2.4	3.4	2.0	3.2
Overall	2.5	3.3	2.1	3.1
Acculturation To The Native Culture				
	Former Soviet		**Vietnamese**	
	Parents	**Adolescents**	**Parents**	**Adolescents**
Native Language	4.0	3.2	4.0 (inferred)	3.0
Native Identity	2.9	3.3	3.8	3.5
Native Behavioral	3.1	2.6	3.5	2.9
Overall	3.4	3.0	3.6	3.2

Acculturation gaps were found to exist with respect to native and American cultures for both groups. Both report somewhat lower levels of native acculturation than their parents. With respect to specific aspects of native acculturation, both former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents report less ability to speak their native language than their parents. However, former Soviet adolescents report a higher level of Russian identity than former Soviet adults, while Vietnamese adolescents are slightly lower than adults in level of Vietnamese identity. On the other hand, former Soviet and Vietnamese parents both report greater participation in such Russian or Vietnamese behaviors as movies, television, and newspapers than do their adolescent children. With respect to American acculturation, adolescents are more acculturated than their parents in language, identity, and behavior.

Implications of the Gap for Family Functioning:

The next question involved whether or not these parent/adolescent acculturation gaps are related to problems in the family, the school, and/or the peer group for the refugee adolescent. Several scholarly papers have suggested that the acculturation gap is a source of stress and family conflict. They suggest that the increasingly American-defined adolescent hopes and expectations about who to be and how to act cause concern among family members who retain a somewhat different set of cultural expectations for their children. None of these prior studies has included former Soviet populations. Moreover, none has measured acculturation in terms of separating language acquisition, cultural identity, and behavioral participation as they relate to both the culture of origin and, in this case, American culture. As seen below, these distinctions make a significant difference in our understanding of the nature of the acculturation gap.

To assess whether or not the acculturation gap was related to family functioning, we ran a series of regressions predicting various aspects of family functioning. For these analyses, the gap was computed as an absolute difference between parent and adolescent acculturation scores. While these analyses found that the gap was indeed often related to adverse family functioning, the specific results were somewhat different for the two populations. The findings on the role of the gap from the parents' perspective are illustrated in Figure 7 and from the adolescents' perspective are illustrated in Figure 8.

Impact of the Acculturation Gaps from Parents' Point of View: Former Soviet and Vietnamese parents differed somewhat with respect to how the acculturation gap with their children affected family functioning. For former Soviet parents, the gaps that best predicted the extent of family disagreements with their adolescent children were those of American identity and Russian Language. For Vietnamese parents, however, the acculturation gap between parents and children related to fewer areas of family functioning.

Impact of the Acculturation Gaps from the Adolescent Perspective: Adolescents from both groups indicated that the acculturation gap between them and their parents was related to a number of areas of family functioning. For both former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents, acculturation gaps in both American identity and American behavior between them and their parents were related to issues in family functioning. For the former Soviet adolescents, they related to increased family conflict and a number of areas of family disagreement were mentioned. The American behavior gap was also related to lower adolescent family satisfaction. For Vietnamese adolescents, gaps in American behavior and Vietnamese identity between parent and adolescent were related to adolescent reports of lower family satisfaction and lower family cohesion. Adolescents also reported that parent/adolescent gaps in Vietnamese language competence were related to number of family disagreements.

Overall, then, the acculturation gap seems to relate to family dynamics more from the perspective of adolescents than their parents, particularly for Vietnamese families. For adolescents of both groups, gaps in American identity and American behavior seemed most important for family functioning, with adolescents being considerably more American than their parents. For Soviet refugee parents, it seems that a gap with respect to fluency in Russian

between them and their children is also a cause for parental concern as reflected in family conflict and disagreement. A focus on the acculturation gap helps clarify the acculturation process as it unfolds in families and represents an area of importance for service providers to understand as part of the overall acculturation process.

Figure 7: Parents' perspective on the role of acculturation gaps in family functioning for former Soviet (illustrated by dotted lines) and Vietnamese refugees (illustrated by dashed line)

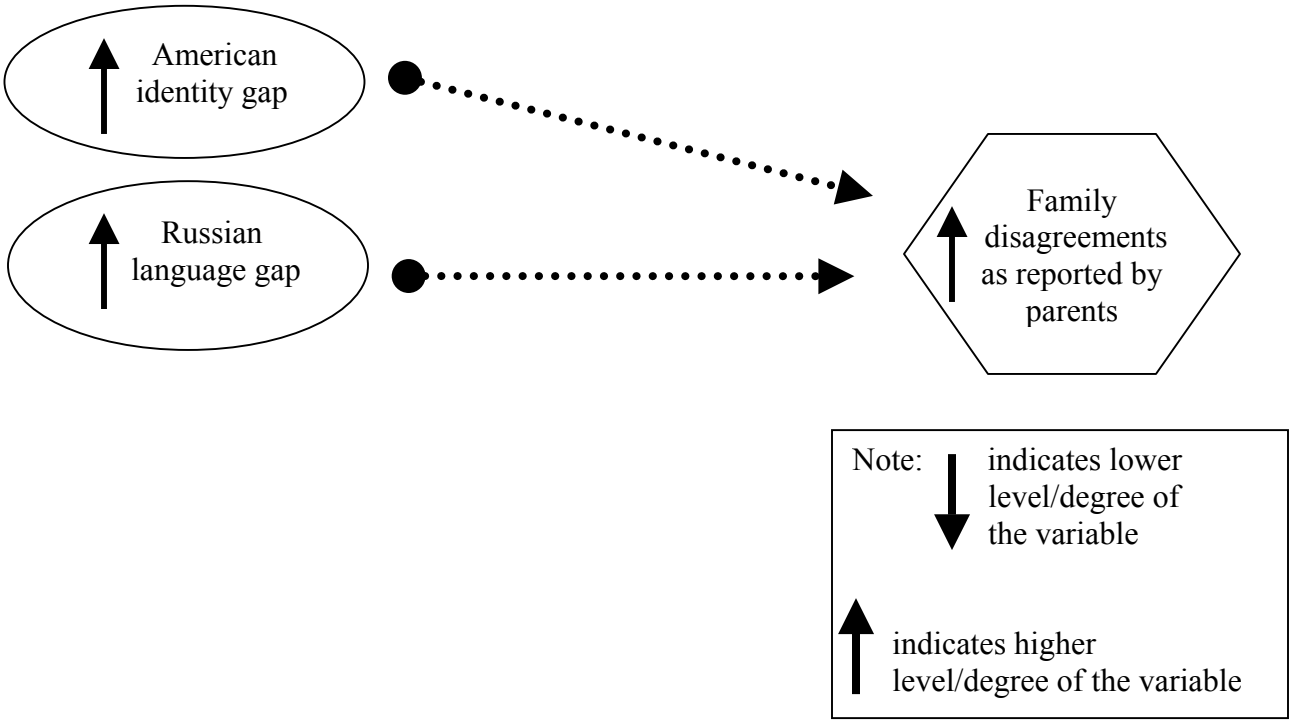
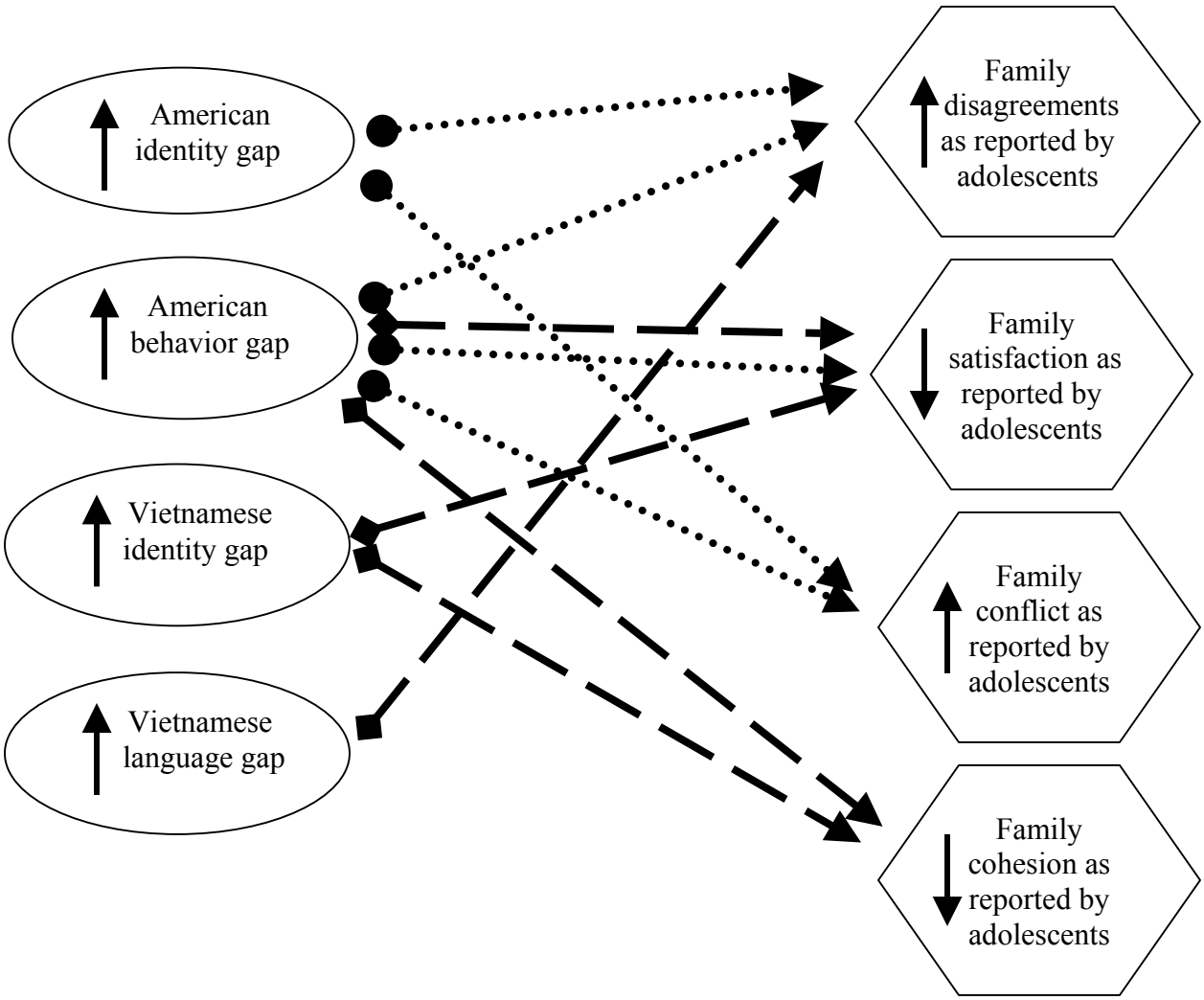


Figure 8: Adolescents' perspective on the role of acculturation gaps in family functioning for former Soviet (illustrated by dotted lines) and Vietnamese refugees (illustrated by dashed line)



Note: ↓ indicates lower level/degree of the variable

↑ indicates higher level/degree of the variable

Culture Broker Role: Its Importance and Relation to Acculturation and Adaptation

The culture broker role for adolescents has received less attention in the scholarly literature than the acculturation gap, though it is probably as important an aspect of the acculturation process. By "culture broker role," we refer to those instrumental activities that adolescents engage in to help their families adjust to the new culture. Such activities as interpreting and translating, making doctors appointments, and filling out income tax forms for parents are made necessary because of limited parental language fluency or not knowing how the school system or the immigration system works. In these circumstances both the increased linguistic ability of adolescents and their increased knowledge of at least certain aspects of American culture place them in a position of potential power in the family unlike what they would have experienced in their county of origin.

This role has been less researched than has the acculturation gap, with perhaps the only consistent finding being that almost all immigrant and refugee adolescent populations thus far studied have engaged in culture brokering activity. While some of the studies have included Vietnamese populations in small numbers, none has focused exclusively on either Vietnamese or former Soviet adolescent populations. The concern, however, is that while this role may be helpful to the family, it is also likely to create strain for the adolescent. It can potentially take time away from the development of peer relationships or schoolwork. Thus, it is important to understand the implications of enacting this role for the academic and psychological wellbeing of these refugee adolescents.

The culture broker measure used for both Former Soviet and Vietnamese was created for a former Soviet sample by Buchanan (2001) and was shown to Vietnamese adolescents to ensure its relevance. It includes 7 items describing different kinds of brokering activities that are answered on a 5-point scale, with zero being "not al all". Each of the items and the total score for the adolescents are found in Table 25.

TABLE 25: CULTURE BROKER ROLE
(1=never do for parents or other family members, 4=do all the time)

	Former Soviet Adolescents	**Vietnamese Adolescents**
	Mean	
Total culture brokering	2.1	2.4
How much do your parents or other family members rely on you to…		
translate for them?	2.5	2.9
answer the telephone for them?	2.4	2.7
explain how schools work in this country?	2.3	2.1
help them fill out applications?	2.2	2.3
Schedule or go on appointments with them?	2.0	2.5
answer the door for them?	1.9	2.5
deal with government agencies?	1.7	1.8

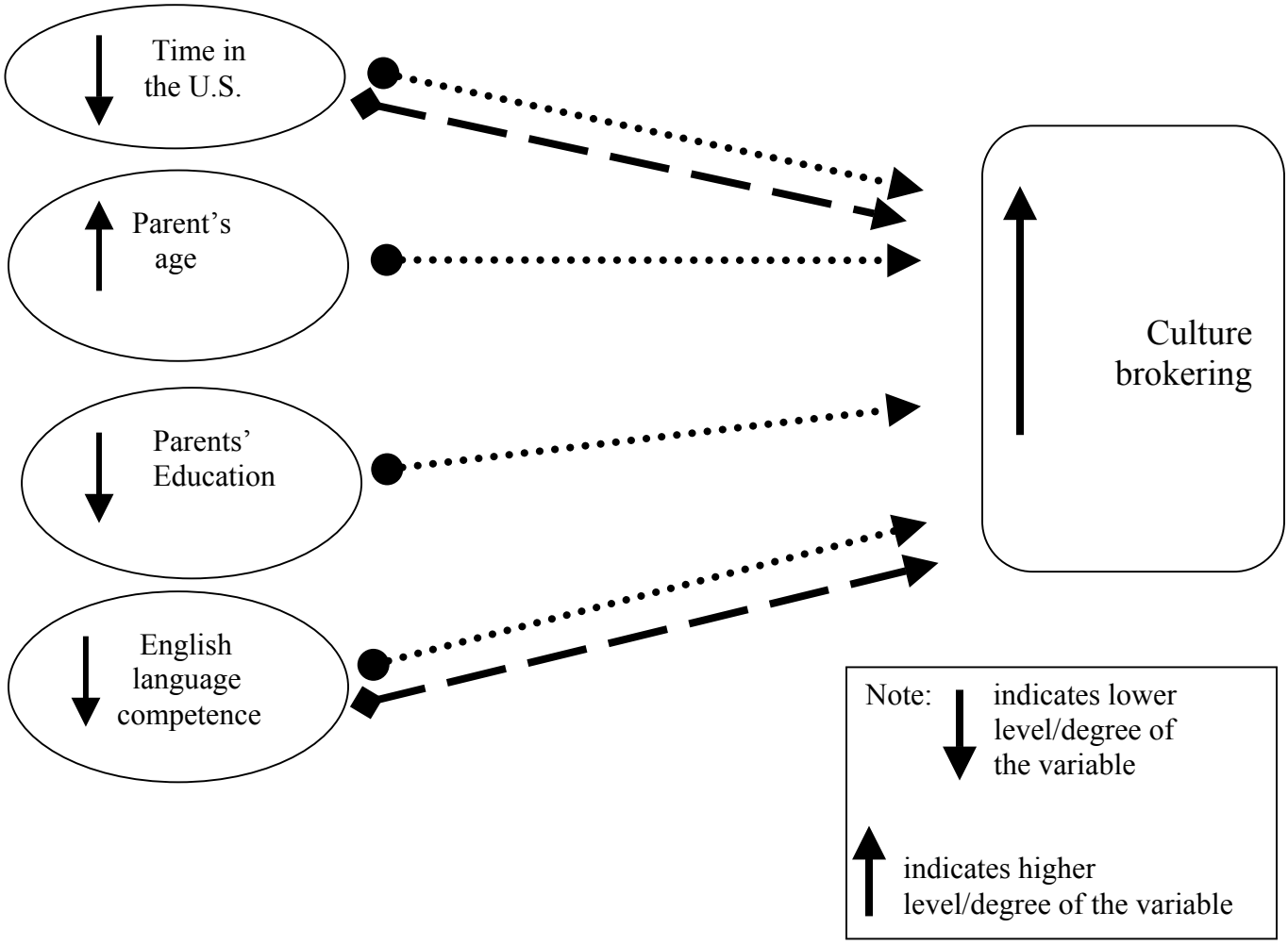
With respect to the culture broker role, Vietnamese adolescents report somewhat more culture brokering than do Former Soviet adolescents.

A frequency count of the culture brokering items found that 91% of the former Soviet adolescents and 98% of Vietnamese adolescents reported engaging in some culture brokering activity. Overall, however, the amount of culture brokering was quite modest, with an average of slightly greater than 2 on a 5-point scale (where zero equals "not at all" and 4 "all the time") for the former Soviet adolescents and a slightly higher 2.4 for Vietnamese adolescents. From Table 25, it is clear that there is some variability in the frequency of culture brokering, with "translating" the most frequently selected behavior for both samples and "dealing with governmental agencies" the least for both groups. In general, the most endorsed items reflect activities carried out primarily in the home, while the least endorsed reflect "out of home" activities.

With respect to factors influencing the amount of adolescent culture brokering, we first conducted multiple regression analyses looking at parent demographic characteristics and brokering. These results are depicted in Figure 9. For the former Soviet sample, the less time the family had been in the country, the older the parent, and the less the parental level of education in the country of origin, the more culture brokering done by the adolescent. Each of these factors seems plausible in increasing the family reliance of their adolescent child to aid in the acculturation and adaptation process. When we looked at how parent acculturation affected the amount of culture brokering, we found that parent level of competence in English was the primary factor. That is, the less the parents' English competence the greater the amount of adolescent brokering.

With respect to parental factors influencing the amount of culture brokering among Vietnamese adolescents, parents' length of time in the U.S. was the only demographic variable related to amount of culture brokering. Here, as with the former Soviet sample, the less time the parents had been in the country, the more culture brokering on the part of the adolescent. With respect to the relationship between acculturation and culture brokering, parental level of English competence showed a statistical trend in the same direction as found with former Soviet parents: the lower the English competence, more adolescent culture brokering. Thus, the same general pattern of findings occurred for both the former Soviet and Vietnamese samples with respect to demographic and acculturative relationships with adolescent culture brokering.

Figure 9: Predictors of Culture Broker role for former Soviet (illustrated by dotted lines) and Vietnamese refugees (illustrated by dashed line)



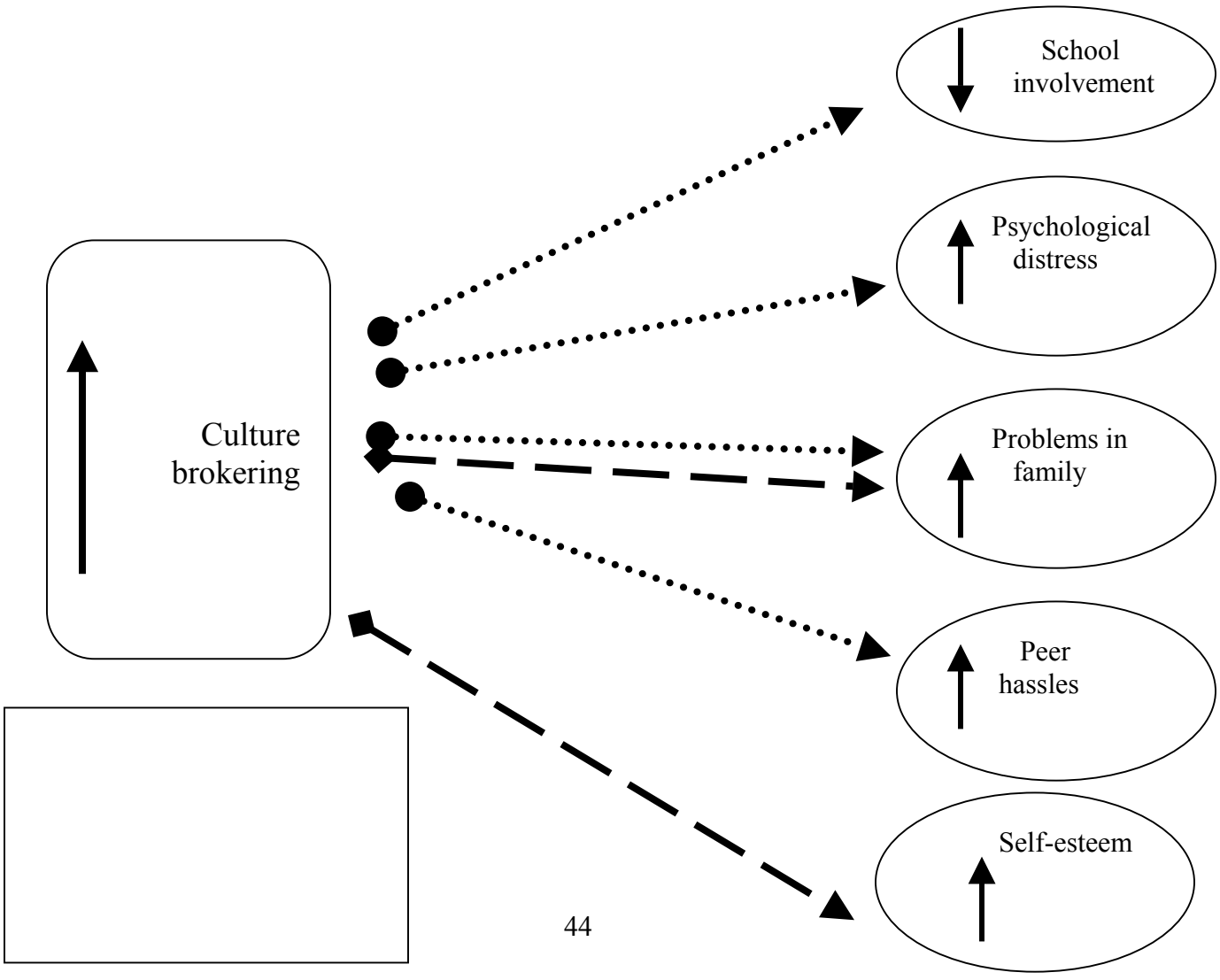
Our final set of analyses asked the question "Does the amount of culture brokering affect adolescent adaptation in school, in the self, in the family, and with peers". The data on this question are illustrated by Figure 10. For the former Soviet adolescents, in the school domain, increased culture brokering is related to less sense of school involvement, though not to worse grades. Psychologically, increased culture brokering was related to increased self-reported emotional distress. With respect to family functioning, adolescent reports of the number of problems experienced in the family were related to the amount of culture brokering they reported, with greater brokering relating to increased reports of family problems. Finally, the number of hassles with peers was also related to the amount of brokering, with more brokering related to more reported peer hassles.

For the Vietnamese adolescents, the implications of culture brokering were different in both degree and, in some cases, direction, from those found among former Soviet adolescents. While increased culture brokering was related to increased family disagreements in both samples, it was related to increased psychological distress among

former Soviet adolescents and increased self-esteem among Vietnamese adolescents. Further, degree of culture brokering affected a wide range of life domains for the former Soviet sample but not the Vietnamese sample, suggesting its relative salience for former Soviet adolescents.

Thus, it seems that among both former Soviet and Vietnamese adolescents, as with other immigrant and refugee groups, culture brokering is something almost all of them do at one time or another, though they do not report doing it frequently. For former Soviet adolescents, amount of culture brokering has negative, though small, consequences in several life domains, while, for Vietnamese adolescents, amount of culture brokering is less related to negative consequences in general and, in the case of self-esteem, is positive in its implications. The reasons for these differences between the two groups are not clear, but the general issue of culture brokering is one that service provides need to be aware of in terms of understanding refugee adolescents.

Figure 10: Culture Broker affecting adaptation of former Soviet (illustrated by dotted lines) and Vietnamese refugee adolescents (illustrated by dashed line)



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